COACH AND BUS WEEK

The PSV Industry's News Weekly

ISSUE 34 OCTOBER 10 1992

THE WRONG SIDE OF THE TRACK

Tram priorities blamed for city centre congestion in Manchester

VAT ON EURO COACH TRAVEL

BCC leads protests against controversial new proposals...
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An Emap business publication

Carlton P.S.V.

VOLVO

1974 B58 PLAXTON ELITE III with MK IV front, 51 seats, radio, side lockers, MoT March 1993. Stock No. 2094.

1983 B10M DUPLE LASER, 12 metre, 57 seater, PA/radio/cassette, 6 speed ZF manual gearbox, MoT 19.07.93. Stock No. 1074.

LEYLAND

1982 LEOPARD DUPLE DOMINANT, 51 reclining seats, double glazing, curtains, 6 speed gearbox, side lockers, MoT March '93. Stock No. 9033.

BEDFORD

1975 YRQ PLAXTON, 45 seats, power door, side lockers, private plates. Stock No. 1062.

FORD

1979 R1014 DUPLE DOMINANT II, Bristol dome, 10 metre, 45 seats recently remoquetted, 6 speed manual gearbox, radio/cassette, PA, MoT 31 May '93. Stock No 2095.

1978 R1014 DUPLE DOMINANT II, Bristol dome, 10 metre, 45 seats, 6 speed manual gearbox, MoT Oct '92. Stock No 2096.

TOYOTA

1989 CAETANO OPTIMO, 18 seater, armrests, curtains, carpet, hot drinks facility, power door, boot, MoT July '93. Stock No 2098.

MINIBUS

1989 TALBOT PEUGEOT TRIAXLE PULLMAN EXPRESS, 2.5 Diesel, 22 seats, plus 7 standees, Pullman body, Dip-Tac specification, power door, destination box and gear, MoT September '93. Stock No. 2089.

NEOPLAN

1987 (D) JETLINER, 11 litre, Scania engine and manual gearbox. This vehicle has just been extensively refurbished inside and out in our workshops. Now fitted with the new style Neoplan front, 49 newly remoquetted reclining seats, courier seat, rear floor mounted toilet, and rear full height continental door. To be sold with cherished number plates, finished in attractive light bronze with colour co-ordinated stripes recently MoT'd. Stock number 2087 ..... **£49,500**

1984 JETLINER DAF 11.6 litre engine and manual gearbox. This vehicle is being extensively refurbished including new floor, remoquetting, new front end, sunken toilet etc. Can still be finished to customers final specification. New MoT, stock number 2085 ..... **£35,000**

SOLD

1985 JETLINER DAF 11.6 litre and manual gearbox. This vehicle is to be refurbished. Can be finished to customer specification. New MoT on completion. Stock No. 2099 **POA**

1983-86 SKYLINERS MERCEDES V10 ZF manual gearboxes, 71-77 seats, toilet, water boilers, 2 tables, various specifications ..... **from £40,000**

DAF

1989 MB230, 11.6 litre Caetano Algarve (3.55 metres), ZF gearbox, 53 recliners, courier seat, curtains, carpets, drinks machine, radio/cassette/PA, power door, cont. door, tinted windows, side & rear lockers, MoT Aug '93. Stock No. 2001.

1988 MB230, 11.6 litre, Caetano Algarve (3.35 metres) ZF gearbox, 49 recliners, courier seat, curtains, drinks machine, radio/cassette/PA, TV/video, power door, cont. door, tinted windows, side & rear lockers, toilet, MoT May '93. Stock No. 2100.

ALL ROADS LEAD TO

AT JUNCTION 1, M18
ROTHERHAM
South Yorkshire

THE BUS & COACH MART

1989 NEOPLAN SKYLINER, double deck, Mercedes V10 engine, ZF 6 Spd gearbox, Telma, 77 reclining seats + courier, twin water boilers, sink, fridge, wc, wash room, wired for TV/video, MoT 1993 ..... **Offers**

1989 ENSIGN CHARISMA MERCEDES, 6spd manual gearbox, air conditioning, 49 recliners, curtains, carpets, courier seat, radio/cassette/PA, centre u/floor toilet, drinks facility, cont. door, drivers bunk, MoT April '93. Stock MO48 ..... **£54,000**

1987 SETRA RATIONAL MERCEDES V8 ZF manual, Voith retarder, 49 recliners, double glazing, curtains, toilet, drinks machine, TV/video, continental door, courier seat, grey moquette, maroon/white exterior, gen 260,000k, MoT June 1993. Stock No MO51 ..... **£57,570**

1983 NEOPLAN CITYLINER, Mercedes V8 engine, 53 recliners, o/s centre sunken toilet, o/s cont door, drinks machine, Webasto, TV/video, courier seat, MoT '93 ..... **£33,500**

1973 LEYLAND LEOPARD PLAXTON SUPREME, semi auto gearbox, 49 seats, MoT Sept '92. Stock MO49 ... **Offers**

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0709 700600

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DAF 1987 DKVL PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M, 51 recliners, red/grey moquette, rear sunken toilet, continental entrance/exit door, tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, drinks machine, power entrance door, wired for T.V./video, TELMA, ABS anti-lock braking, cream/duo blue.
M.O.T. MAY 1993

DAF 1986 DKFL PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M, 49/53 recliners, grey/red moquette, demountable rear sunken toilet, continental exit door, courier seat, curtains, power entrance door, wired for T.V./video, cream/duo blue.
M.O.T. FEB 1993.

BOVA 1982 EUROPA II INTEGRAL 12M, 51 recliners, brown moquette, white/red.
M.O.T. AUG 1993

VOLVO 1988 B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE-H 12M, 49 recliners, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows with pull-down blinds, TELMA retarder, chassis autolube, Webasto heating, drinks machine, coolbox, courier seat, white.
M.O.T. 1993

VOLVO 1984 B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE-SH 12M, 50 recliners, brown moquette, courier seat, rear continental door, Webasto heating, fridge, orange/cream.
M.O.T. APRIL 1993

VOLVO 1987 B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE-H 12M, 53 recliners, brown moquette, double glazing, TELMA, power door. All white.
M.O.T. MARCH 1993

VOLVO 1986 VAN HOOL ACRON T815 INTEGRAL 12M, DAF powered, 49 recliners, brown moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental door, berth, double glazed windows, blinds, drinks machine, fridge, courier seat, wired T.V./video, cream/green.
M.O.T. JUNE 1993

LEYLAND 1989 (August) TIGER (260 BHP) DUPLE 320 12M, 53 recliners, double glazed tinted side windows with pull-down blinds, TELMA retarder, chassis autolube, cream/orange/yellow. CHOICE OF TWO IDENTICAL VEHICLES
M.O.T. 1993

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Choice of Interior Colours

DAF 1984 DKFL DUPLE CARIBBEAN 12M, 53 str., grey/blue/black moquette, toilet with rear continental door, courier seat, double glazed side windows, power entrance door, TELMA retarder, cream/duo blue.
M.O.T. DEC 1992

VOLVO 1988 B10M GL JONCKHEERE JUBILEE P599 12M, 53 recliners, grey/red moquette, courier seat, double glazed side windows, white/primrose/blue.
M.O.T. JAN 1993

VOLVO 1984 B10M VAN HOOL ASTRAL 12M, 58 recliners, brown/orange moquette, n/s sunken toilet, window blinds with curtains, driver's berth, Webasto, courier seat, wired T.V./video, servery, drinks machine, white/grey/blue.
M.O.T. NOV. 1992

DAF 1983 SB2300 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200 12M, 47 recliners, Autumn tint moquette, toilet, driver's berth, water boiler, Webasto, courier seat, curtains, wired T.V./video, white/blue.
M.O.T. JULY 1993

LEYLAND 1989 TIGER (260 BHP) DUPLE 320 12M, 53 recliners, double glazed tinted side windows with pull-down blinds, TELMA retarder, chassis autolube, cream/orange/yellow.
M.O.T. 1993

VOLVO 1989 B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE-H 12M, 53 recliners, double glazed tinted side windows with pull-down blinds, TELMA retarder, chassis autolube, courier seat, cream/orange/yellow.
M.O.T. 1993

BOVA 1989 FUTURA FHD 12.290 INTEGRAL 12M, 49 str., centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazing, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, no rear window, cream/green/gold.
M.O.T. 1993

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COACH AND BUS WEEK
The PSV Industry's News Weekly
ISSUE 34 OCTOBER 10 1992

THERE is only one word to describe the EC's latest plans to impose VAT, at local rate, on coach travel. It is ridiculous.

If the EC ministers responsible want a few more words, they are impractical, unnecessary, unjust, unbelievable and unworkable. That the plans apply only to the coach industry suggests the EC is scared of the powerful air and rail travel lobbies so is attempting to milk the smaller, meeker cash cow of coach travel.

The Bus & Coach Council is quite right to say the idea makes a mockery of European unity. Since VAT rates vary so widely in the EC, any legislation of this sort will be divisive in the extreme. *Coach and Bus Week* joins the Bus & Coach Council in opposing any plan of this kind.

If the EC ministers responsible want a few more words, they are impractical, unnecessary, unjust, unbelievable and unworkable

Never has there been a better time for the coach tour operator - already trying to come to terms with the EC's package deal legislation - to write to his or her MP in the strongest possible terms for, make no mistake, any sign of apathy will allow this nonsense to go ahead.

Just in case the mindless ideas of the Brussels Eurocrats aren't enough to get you down, then there's the gloomy picture painted by the latest Department of Transport statistics. Declining bus patronage and rising car use since 1981 are confirmed. Yet the decline in local bus passengers from 5,694 million in 1981 to 4,851 million in 1990 -1991 should be seen against the mounting environmental cost, with emissions of carbon monoxide from all road traffic up by 42 per cent to nearly six million tonnes per year between 1981 and 1990.

Transport Statistics Great Britain 1992 also provides another glimmer of hope - bus patronage is holding up compared to other forms of road transport in spite of the recession.

All in all, it seems that the road passenger transport industry is weathering the recession rather better than its freight counterpart. And *Transport Statistics Great Britain 1992* provides the industry with useful ammunition to campaign for greater support for the bus and coach industry.

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THE MOTOR INDUSTRY SMMT
MEMBERS
BUS & COACH COUNCIL
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DIGEST

Claims that the Metrolink tram is easing traffic problems in Manchester city centre have been challenged by bus operators, who say that the system has increased pressure on road space. Although 25,000 passengers a day use the system, it has taken space previously occupied by bus stands, and causes massive delays when tramcars jump the points. Citibus managing director, Roger Green said: "It's a bloody train, not a tram and it's causing congestion." Page 7.

A four-week motorway speed limit enforcement campaign by Greater Manchester Police saw the coach industry emerge with an unblemished record. Coaches were the only class of vehicle not to break limits during the period and, of the 171 coaches spot checked during a two-month purge by the police, only 13 older vehicles, outside the scope of the 70 mph legislation, merited further investigation. Page 11.

Ralphs Coaches of Langley has won a five-year contract to provide airport shuttle coaches for the Marriott Hotel of Slough. The contract calls for five new high-specification Optare StarRider midicoaches with 27 seats and air conditioning. Ralphs now runs a fleet of over 40 coaches and is heavily involved with work at London's three international airports. Page 12.

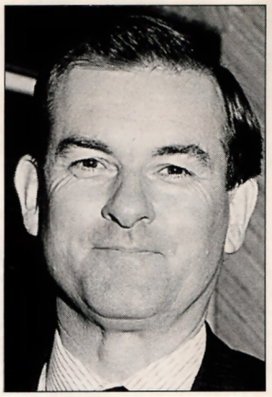
Four more London garages are to cl as London Buses subsidiaries prepare th selves for privatisation ahead of deregulation. East London, which is shutting three of its e isting garages, is to open a new 250-vehicle depot and head office complex on a green field site in Chadwell Heath. Meanwhile, the Transport & General Workers Union has renewed its pre-election call for a public inquiry into the future of transport in London. Page 14.

COACH AND BUS EVENTS:

- October 14 to 18: Mitcar, Paris-Le Bourget Exhibition Centre, France, tel 010 33 1 43 79 06 30.
- October 19 to 23: Basic Scheduling course, Chesterfield Hotel. Ann Burton, QV Associates,tel 0527 893991.
- October 21-23: Expocoach 92, International Exhibition Centre Donington Park, tel 0768 881838.
- October 23: The Accessible Transport Chain - a national conference, Birkbeck College, London WC1. Dr Elaine Smith, tel 071 631 6685/6659.
- October 27: Omnibus Society Meeting, John Cartledge - passenger information. London Transport, 55 Broadway. Barry Lejeune, tel 071 918 3295.
- October 28 to November 1, Autobus RAI 92, Maastricht Exhibition and Congress Centre, Holland, tel 010 31 20 5491212.
- October 30 to November 1: BCC Annual Conference, Eastbourne, tel 071 831 7546.
- November 12: Interior Safety of Passenger Transport seminar. IMechE, London, tel 071 222 7899, Fax 071 222 4557.

COACH

Too late for bonding...



Phillip Carlisle

By Mark Williams

SLOW-MOVING Government bonding legislation has left hundreds of coach operators high and dry, with little chance of bonding or insuring tours by next year.

The Department of Trade and Industry has spent more than a year complying with the EC package travel directive to produce legislation, only two weeks ago coming up with its final consultation document. It now looks like many recession-hit coach operators will have to pull out of the own-tour market altogether.

Bonding agencies and insurance companies have experienced a sudden demand for package protection.

One insurance company, Chapman Stevens, is now limiting cover to its regular customers, and the Bus & Coach Council admits that it will not be possible for non-BCC operators to enter the Bonded Coach Holidays scheme before the January 1 deadline.

Many coach operators have turned to the banks for help, using trust accounts to meet the forthcoming legislation and getting expensive overdrafts to cure the cash flow problem.

Some who have approached insurers and bonding agencies have been told their companies are either technically insolvent or are not financially stable enough to be covered.

"Sadly, these problems are not self-inflicted," said Phillip Carlisle of the BCC. "The Government has dragged its heels over this legislation and we still haven't heard what the final word of legislation will be."

Mr Carlisle said operators should be looking at two options or more. BCC members may be able to get into the BCH scheme in six weeks. Failing that, new insurance packages are almost certain to be announced soon. But many operators may be left with the relatively costly trust account option.

■ *Coach and Bus Week* will be running a seminar examining all issues of the new package deal legislation on November 13 - when the DTi will have announced the final draft.

Cost of the full day, including lunch, is likely to be around £65 per operator. To register your interest, phone Stephen Rodgers on 0272 221055. Final details will be announced next week.

Three tiers in DTi proposals

THE Government's answer to the EC package deal directive looks likely to give three options of insolvency protection for the consumer. It appears that original plans to police the directive with a licensing scheme have been dropped.

Instead, operators will have to provide evidence of either bonding; insurance; or trust accounts for each tour package, when asked to do so by local weights and measures authorities.

The insurance option must be a contract between the holidaymaker and the insurance company, through whom any claim would be routed. In all cases, the protective measures taken by the operator must be stated clearly in brochures, and the bank trustee, bonding agency or insurer named.

The proposals clearly state that, in the event of an operator opening trust accounts, the cost of providing them will not be passed to the consumer but interest on cash collected will be payable to the operator on demand. Voluntary organisers, such as sports and social club secretaries, are not exempt from the regulations but may open special trust accounts where invoiced costs can be paid out before the package is performed.

COACH AND BUS

Time running out for MMI

TIME was running out for insurance giant Municipal and Mutual Insurance as *Coach and Bus Week* went to press. The company covers most municipal and PTC companies as well as London Transport's bus company subsidiaries and London Underground (*Coach and Bus Week*, October 3).

A statement issued by MMI last week admitted that the company had ceased to write new business and renew existing policies, and that negotiations with a potential French buyer had ended. MMI chief executive Brian Wright said: "We have been negotiating with the French group GMF to seek a satisfactory transfer of the business.

"Unfortunately, it is now clear that this will not be possible and discussions have been broken off.

"MMI is currently in discussions with leading insurers to seek arrangements for the transfer of parts of its business. Further details will be announced as soon as possible. MMI will discuss with local authorities the possibility of an arrangement for their existing insurances with MMI." CBW

■ COACH

EC's new VAT law nightmare

A PLAN by EC bureaucrats to impose new VAT laws on coaching by January 1 has been slammed as "an absolute nightmare" by the Bus & Coach Council.

The BCC says the proposal from the EC makes a mockery of unrestricted inter-community travel, and has targeted only the coach tourism industry: "This is gross discrimination," said BCC president Graham Smith.

"It could easily kill off the UK's continental coach holidays and cut international coach travel."

The scheme attempts to impose VAT at each country's local rate on coach travel, depending on the point of origin of each leg of the journey. For example, the outbound leg of an express journey from the UK to Germany would be zero rated - since the UK does not

By Mark Williams

impose VAT on travel - while the return trip would be subject to 14 per cent VAT.

The plan would also affect tours where the coach spends more than 24 hours in a country. For example, a two-centre France/Germany tour from the UK would be subject to VAT at France's 19 per cent for a proportion of the tour, and Germany's 14 per cent for another part of the tour, and zero-rated for the UK leg unless it began in France. It is unclear how the EC expects to separate the 'travel' element from the rest of a tour package.

"What is more, we understand that the proposed directive will force operators to have an official to account for VAT to the authorities in every country in which they operate," said Mr Smith. "This will put pounds on prices - and the extra costs will have to be passed on to customers."

The BCC director general, Veronica Palmer, has written to Michael Portillo, financial secretary to the Treasury, complaining about the proposal.

The Coach Tourism Council's vice-chair, Margaret Palmer, said it was difficult to see the need for an additional tier of tax on travel when road tolls were already paid by coach drivers: "Frankly, as a small coach operator, the application of VAT in this way would persuade me to pull out of continental tour operation altogether," she said.

Eurolines managing director David Rendell said his firm already paid a per-kilometre transportation tax for parts of its scheduled express operation, even

"THEY'RE TRYING TO AVOID PAYING THE VAT ON THE RETURN LEG"

though rail and air are exempt. The further imposition of VAT would make overseas operation almost unworkable.

"Tax is already a nightmare to administer. It is inequitable, and Eurolines is very concerned that even now the level playing field argument for the EC does not apply to travel," he told *Coach and Bus Week*.

Shearings managing director John Slatcher said he hadn't yet seen the proposals but, from what he knew, another tier of tax would be "totally unworkable."

"VAT on coach travel alone would be completely unfair, and would place us at a disadvantage. It would be an unnecessary burden on the industry," he said.

Shearings' parent company, Rank, would be investigating the situation immediately and would begin lobbying Government, he added.

Stagecoach has halved B6 order

■ COACH AND BUS

B6 production delays mean more order cancellations

DELAYS in the start of Volvo B6 series production have led to Brian Souter's Stagecoach Holdings cancelling half its 200-vehicle order for the rear-engined midibus chassis.

The Perth-based company is to take a unique version of the mid-engined Volvo B10M instead, with body production beginning at Walter Alexander now.

Stagecoach's order is not the first for the B6 to be cancelled because of delays in production.

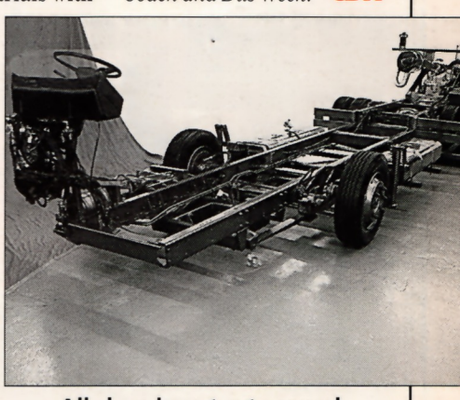
London General has already substituted Dennis Darts for 21 of the Volvos ordered for use on a tendered route last summer (*Coach and Bus Week*, July 4).

Plans to build the B6 at the former Steyr Bus plant in Vienna for left-hand-drive markets have been abandoned. Production of right and left-hand-drive variants will now be concentrated at the Volvo Trucks plant in Irvine, Scotland, with the first chassis being laid down early in March 1993, for delivery to bodybuilders in April.

Prototype B6s, with Austrian-built chassis, are currently undergoing trials with UK operators.

SYT - Mainline, which is running a B6 alongside an example of the rival Dennis Dart design, has encountered teething problems with the vehicle and is currently experimenting with a ZF 4HP500 transmission unit and integral retarder in place of the Allison automatic transmission and Telma electric retarder fitted when the chassis left the factory.

A coach-bodied B6 is expected to appear at Expocoach 92 at Donington Park Exhibition Centre on October 21 - 23. Look out for an exclusive preview in *Coach and Bus Week*. CBW



All chassis output moved

■ COACH

Not among the creditors

IN our story last week 'Scott's Greys crash leaves trail of debt' we stated that Greyfriars Travel worked for Scott's Greys. There was no intention to suggest that Greyfriars Travel is owed money by Scott's Greys. Greyfriars of Stockton on Tees once undertook one, short-term hire for Scott's Greys, but is not among Scott's Greys' creditors.

Scania Coach Sales

SCANIA K113 PLAXTON 3500

1989, current MoT, automatic, toilet, double glazing, radio/pa/cassette, rear curtains, side blinds, 49 seats + courier **£85,750.00**

SCANIA K92 VAN HOOL ALIZEE H

1988, current MoT, C.A.G. gearbox, radio/pa/cassette, 55 reclining seats, power door, curtains **£67,500.00**

SCANIA K93 DUPLE 320 SL

1989, current MoT, automatic power door, radio/pa/cassette, curtains, 55 reclining seats **£57,500.00**

VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE H

86/87, current MoT, 6 speed ZF gearbox, Telma, double glazed, rear curtains, side blinds, 53 reclining seats
86 **£62,750.00** 87 **£72,750.00**

LEYLAND TIGER PLAXTON 3200

87/88, current MoT, 6 speed ZF gearbox, Telma, double glazed, rear curtains, side blinds, 53 recliners or 57 fixed seats
87 **£58,750.00** 88 **£64,750.00**

DENNIS JAVELIN PLAXTON 3200

91, current MoT, 6 speed ZF gearbox, 11 metre body, side lockers, power door, wired for TV-video, radio/pa/cassette, 53 recliners **£65,000.00**

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90, current MoT, full coach trim, power door, 33 seats + 8 standees **£39,750.00**

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82 LEYLAND TIGER PLAXTON SUPREME, 53
82 BEDFORD YMP PLAXTON SUPREME, 35

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■ LIGHT RAIL AND BUS

Operators deny Metrolink helps

Metrolink causing delays, operators claim

ASSERTIONS by Bill Tyson that Manchester's Metrolink had eased traffic problems and was helping to solve major congestion problems have been challenged by Manchester's bus operators, who say that pressure on road space has never been greater since trams hit the road.

Mr Tyson, GMPTE'S director of planning, told 800 transport managers and academics at the PTRC conference in Manchester that over 25,000 passengers a day were using the system.

Bus operators point out that this has been achieved by the loss of a large number of bus stands and a halving

By Andrew Jarosz

of city centre road space. Citibus managing director Roger Green said: "It's a bloody train, not a tram and it's causing congestion.

"We are running late, sustaining damage where our buses are hitting road mounds built for the train and, by the time Christmas comes, the congestion will be horrendous."

Operators point to breakdown delays when a tram jumps the points, instancing one event when the city centre traffic stopped for an hour.

Buses have also been hit by trams, with at least two serious collisions being recorded.

Bee Line's operations manager Chris Jones said the company had had to employ a full-time regulator at Piccadilly since the launch of Metrolink to keep services running. Both companies claim to be at the point where extra buses will have to be drafted in to maintain current timetables.

Metrolink chief executive Chelvin Hibbert countered by claiming that bus tyres were damaging pointwork. "It would be wonderful if competing bus services were withdrawn and buses adopted their proper role of being feeder services to Metrolink," he said.

Mr Tyson admitted that there was peak-time congestion in Manchester but felt it could be resolved with fine tuning. "We are studying the issue of bus routeing in the centre and will develop a strategic bus decongestion system."

The PTE has also commissioned two independent monitoring studies which will report on traffic management issues.

Mr Tyson denied that they would result in buses being shunted into back street termini.

"We believe in investing in all modes of public transport and the bus carries more passengers than all the other modes put together."

■ BUS

'Answer lies with you' - md

"THE ball is very much at the feet of the British bus industry, if its wants to invest and prosper." That was the message from Alan Cannell, who was describing the prosperity of Brazilian bus operators who had banded together to encourage government support for their operations.

Mr Cannell, managing director of Transcraft of Brazil, is in Sheffield for three weeks to advise South Yorkshire Transport on ways to adopt some of the successful ideas of Brazilian bus companies (*Coach and Bus Week*, September 19).

Although public transport is not subsidised in that country, private operators have obtained generous loans from the National Industrial Development Bank and support a new bus market of 20,000 vehicles per annum. Vehicles are retained for about seven years before being cascaded to other duties in the interior.

Integrated bus systems built upon a system of licensing and franchising are both supported and quality controlled by city authorities, which contribute new infrastructure to encourage bus usage on redesigned networks.

Patronage in some cities has more than doubled over the last five years as high frequency, high capacity new vehicles have been introduced with patronage encouraged by flat fares and accessibility to the entire route network.

Mr Cannell said: "What you see in this country is what you get. You have inefficiency, old vehicles, poor passenger facilities, high frequency minibuses on trunk routes, all leading to a waste of resources."

He believed that, if privatisation was the name of the game, investment should be encouraged. "Competition in Brazil is over relative efficiency of operators. Racing for the same passengers on the same route is dumb and went out in the 1950s.

■ Diary: page 21

Brazilian briefing

- **MOST operators are private, but licensed by local or regional authority**
- **Transcraft has devised integrated bus networks for most major cities on behalf of local union of bus operators and authorities.**
- **Networks shared out between private operators, who negotiate fare levels with authorities.**
- **National Economic Development Bank gives loans to franchised operators for 20,000 new buses per annum.**
- **"Common" financing gives loan of 30 per cent at 12 per cent interest, six months grace and 36 months to pay,**
- **"Finamo" integrated systems finance gives loan of 70 per cent at 10 per cent interest, 12 months grace and 60 months to pay.**
- **Operators enjoy higher patronage, lower costs and increased company values leading to greater stability.**
- **Competition between companies on operations and costs, with cost savings on rationalised trunk routes using new high capacity vehicles.**

■ BUS

Sheffield Omnibus' £90,000 profit

INDEPENDENT Sheffield Omnibus, which started trading last year, has recorded an operating profit of over £90,000 in its first year, in spite of shouldering heavy start-up costs.

After interest payments, £90,404 profit on £1.25 million turnover netted out at £32,584 before tax.

Operations started with seven peak vehicles and had risen to 30 by the end of the accounting period on January 31, 1992.

Managing director Ian Dyson said the results were "on budget" with an operating profit higher than planned.

He thought, however, that the biggest boost to profitability would come not from expansion but when the largest competitor, SYT-Mainline, became "balance sheet accountable."

"At present SYT has the benefit of a bi-annual share call on the local poll tax payers (£1.4 million this year alone).

"These cash injections were to be used to ease the company into the marketplace but have been squandered on wasteful and sometimes unfair competition to force balance sheet accountable firms out of business," he claimed.

"SYT's privatisation, hopefully into three operating units, will not only aid competition but reduce congestion by removing blatantly uneconomic duplicates," Mr Dyson claimed

"The signs for the future are also good, with the company expanding to 60 peak vehicles, and a new depot in operation at Chesterfield."

Future plans include the opening of a new depot in Sheffield during 1993 and the start of a new vehicle programme towards the end of that year. CBW

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VOLVO

NEWS

■ ROAD safety can be improved throughout the European Community through the exchange of ideas and initiatives stressed Lord James Douglas-Hamilton MP, Minister at the Scottish Office with responsibility for roads and transport. The Minister was speaking at the opening of the annual conference of the Scottish Road Safety Campaign at the Scottish Police College, Tulliallan.

■ AA-BRS Fleet Rescue helped save an attempt to climb Ben Nevis, Snowdon and Scafell in 48 hours. An eight-man team from Essex raising money for charity broke down but, after AA-BRS got them started, went on to achieve their aim... within the slim margin of eight minutes!

■ STREAMLINING of existing help schemes for small businesses, and a new, three-year plan for a campaign to help firms tackle environmental issues have been announced by Michael Heseltine. Government funding is being provided for the latter scheme, while a Joint Environmental Markets Unit is to be established to research the market for environmental technology.

■ ONE of the early casualties of the MMI instability was the West Yorkshire Transport Museum at Bradford which had to call off its gala open day and rally last weekend at short notice. Museum staff were left without cover on Friday afternoon and efforts to arrange alternative public liability insurance failed as very exorbitant terms were being offered. The museum intends to rearrange the event for November 1, on the assumption that cover will be arranged by then.

■ THE park-and-ride service in Shrewsbury has been given a welcome boost by increased prices for car parking in the city centre, while park-and-ride season ticket prices have been maintained at £1 per week or £4 per month. The service, which links the livestock market car park with city centre bus stops, is financed by Shropshire County Council and Shrewsbury & Atcham Borough Council and operated by local independent Williamsons. A Saturday-only service using the Shirehall car park is operated by Hotspur Midland Red.

■ BUS

Citybus wins Hong Kong franchise

Before: The ex-Singapore AN68...

...and after, facelifted for Hong Kong

By Richard Simpson

TT TSUI'S Citybus has won a three year franchise to operate 26 bus routes on Hong Kong Island previously run by China Motor Bus.

The work will require 200 additional double-deck buses, of which at least 85 will be brand new tri-axle air-conditioned Leyland Olympians with Alexander bodies. The balance is refurbished mid-life AN68 Atlanteans from Singapore Bus Services.

Citybus managing director, Lyndon Rees said: "The decision places a very heavy responsibility on the company to adequately support the government's transport policy, but I feel that Citybus is more than equal to the challenge."

The AN68s are being displaced from Singapore by the recent order for 200 tri-axle Olympians (*Coach and Bus Week*, September 26).

They will be totally refurbished before entering service in the Crown Colony, with the major external modification being the fitment of a new Alexander R type front.

Citybus will keep the AN68s in service on Hong Kong Island for up to three years before they will be replaced by a further intake of new air-conditioned deckers and transferred to work on mainland China.

To cope with the larger bus fleet, Citybus is expanding its fleet engineering infrastructure, and plans to open three new maintenance facilities in the next year.

Citybus started operations with a single Volvo Ailsa in 1980. It has become recognised as one of the most progressive bus companies in Hong Kong, and its parent company the CNT Group also owns British operator Capital Citybus.

■ COACH AND BUS

Two independents join battle in Hull

TWO new contenders are joining the competition on Hull city services this month, with local operator Alpha Coaches leading in this week with an assortment of services which compete with KHCT and East Yorkshire.

Alpha's owner Craig Porteous claims that the move will recoup revenue after the loss of eight school contracts to East Yorkshire. Services have been designed to fit around remaining contracts and will utilise vehicles fully.

"We certainly aren't coming in for a bus war. We aren't going to be racing between stops," he said.

A stronger challenge starts later this month from Barnsley-based Pride of the Road, which is establishing an operating base in the city. The company has registered routes into north Hull, Bransholme and Willerby Road and intends to expand the network further.

The company had operated local bus services in South and West Yorkshire but sold the services to Yorkshire Traction in May and Yorkshire Rider in July this year.

POR's Huddersfield manager Paul Roter said there was a good opportunity for a newcomer to Hull. "The buses get to the bus station and the drivers go off to the canteen. That's no way to run a bus service."

Mr Roter will supervise operations, although a local manager is being appointed. About nine staff will be taken on initially and services will start with six buses, and rise to 10 later next month.

The company has retained some single-deck Nationals after its sales of Yorkshire routes, but does not rule out obtaining further Ikarus-bodied DAF SB220s, which performed successfully in West Yorkshire.

■ BUS

Challenger expands

LUTON newcomer Challenger Transport is looking for more Sherpa minibuses after a "highly successful" 10 months' trading.

The firm, which was set up by four former Luton & District employees together with a qualified accountant, claims to be profitable despite intense competition from L & D: "We knew we would get competition," said former L &D assistant chief engineer Paul Woolmore.

"We were disillusioned with L & D, following its rapid expansion, when we set the company up."

He said L & D had put nine vehicles on to identical routes Challenger was servicing with five but the effect had been minimal. "Our peak loadings are very good indeed and off-peak quite satisfactory."

Luton & District managing director Graham Cumming said the 16-seaters weren't causing him much concern: "Yes, Challenger has had some effect since it operates on a key corridor between Luton and Dunstable, but the firm is running just ten minibuses against us."

■ BUS

Taxi operator to start bus service in Cheltenham

WESTERN Travel's Cheltenham & Gloucester subsidiary faces competition in its home town from Gloucestershire's biggest taxi operator. Steve Clarke, a partner in Star Line, said the company would start operations in early November with two 16-seat vehicles in Cheltenham.

"We're launching on the back of our well-established taxi business and hope to carve ourselves out a niche in the bus market," he said.

Western Travel managing director Norrie Thomas said: "They will be competing on what is our highest frequency route in Cheltenham. We have not made any response as such, but we will be looking at the hackney market in Cheltenham."

The Star Line bus operation has been established following the "start a bus service" seminars run by Clayton Jones in the Gloucester area (Coach and Bus Week, August 15).

Mr Jones' wife, Alison, runs services in south Wales in competition with Western Travel's Red & White subsidiary. **CBW**

■ COACH

Police fail to find faults

By Mike Morgan

DESPITE the coach speed limiter clampdown and a four-week speed enforcement campaign by Greater Manchester Police, PSV operators using the motorway network have emerged with a clean bill of health.

Throughout the last two months 171 coaches were 'pulled' as part of the GMP speed limiter initiative. Apart from minor infringements involving the display of the necessary plates only 13 merited further investigation. However, these were older vehicles either outside the scope of the legislation or governed to restrict maximum speed to below 70 mph.

Inspector Peter Aaronson of the GMP motorway unit praised the responsible attitude of the coach and bus industry. He said: "If this sample is representative of all the coaches in the country, then the results do not support speculative talk about speeding coaches.

"Vehicles on tight schedules were of concern but we found nothing at all wrong.

"Nevertheless operators mustn't allow complacency to creep in. These are excellent results for the PSV industry and long may it remain that way"

Throughout the simultaneous check on motorway speeding, coaches were the only vehicles which consistently stayed within the law. During a four week period 1,837 vehicles were stopped. Of these 42 were HGV offenders - the rest being drivers of cars or light commercials. The worst examples of excessive speed included a car 'clocked' at 94 mph through road works with a 50 mph limit and another which reached 149 mph.

GM Police 'pulled' 171 coaches

■ COACH AND BUS

Merc DAF deal looms

AN announcement of some form of alliance between Mercedes Benz and DAF was expected as *Coach and Bus Week* went to press.

The deal has been anticipated by the industry for some time (*Coach and Bus Week*, September 5), and is understood to include the Multipart all-make spares operation run by Leyland DAF in the United Kingdom.

It is not clear what the implications of any deal between DAF and Mercedes would have on United Bus, which owns British bus builder Optare and chassis builder DAF Bus.

● Mercedes Benz is expected to announce an order for five full-size single-deck city buses from a major Scottish operator in the next few days. The deal will mark Mercedes' first major success in the British heavy bus market.

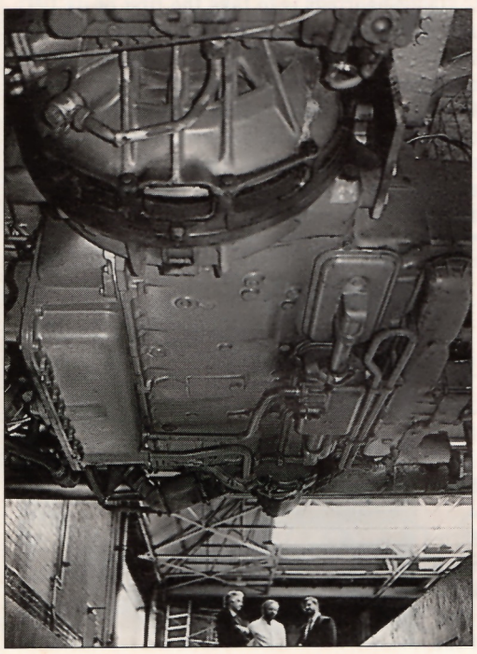
■ COACH

Crash survivors to sue

TYRE maker Avon Rubber has confirmed it is being sued by survivors of the Montego European coach crash in France two years ago. Action against Avon and the now-defunct Montego European is being taken by a number of relatives of the 11 who were killed, and survivors of the motorway accident at Joigny.

"Avon Rubber's response to writs issued against Avon Tyres in respect of the coach crash in France in June 1990 is to deny all liability," said an official statement from Avon, based at Melksham. "From our own extensive investigations in France and elsewhere, we are confident that Avon Tyres was not at fault, and that we shall be successful in convincing the court that this is so."

The coach left the road - which had no safety barrier - and rolled down a steep verge.



Volvo engine in place in a National

■ COACH AND BUS

Reading may refurbish

READING Buses is considering refurbishment as part of its plans to modernise the vehicles acquired earlier this year with the former Q Drive Bee Line's Reading and Newbury business.

Managing director Rod Wilson said: "A lot of investment is needed in the Bee Line fleet which we want to bring up to the same quality of delivery as our Reading operations."

The company is earmarking £200,000 for a possible refurbishment of between 10 and 15 Leyland Nationals, upgrading the bodywork and taking advantage of a re-engining and replacement transmission package offered by Volvo through its Nottingham-based Yeates Bus & Coach subsidiary.

Trent Buses has a prototype Volvo THD100-powered National on the road and Sheffield independent, Yorkshire Terrier, was among the upgradeing to the engine (*Coach and Bus Week*, August 15).

In addition, Reading plans to continue modernising the main fleet with more Optare Spectra double-deckers and some single-deckers, possibly either Optare Vectas or low-floor Dennis SLFs.

It has a four-year programme to replace the eight Duple 425 and eight Olympian double-deckers on its Reading-London London Line services; three replaced this year with five coaches to be bought in 1993/94, and four each in 1994/95 and 1995/96.

CBW

■ URBIS lighting has been used to cheer up the long winter evenings at Euston bus station. High pressure sodium lamps have been fitted by the Basingstoke firm to reduce power use and maintenance, and provide a user-friendly environment.

■ THE Hayes bypass - one of the largest road schemes ever built by London Boroughs - has been welcomed by Transport Secretary John MacGregor. Funded largely by the Government, the £80 million, three mile long road from the A40 to the M4 has a two-way flow in excess of 3,000 vehicles an hour.

■ LONDON Buses has been nominated for a Tidy Britain Group award for its anti-litter campaign, launched in November '91. The winner will be announced at the Queen Mother's Birthday Awards on October 6 at a dinner in London.

■ TRANSPORT systems specialist MVA Systematica has entered a consultancy aggrement with Merseytravel to produce a passenger information service. Merseytravel says a new system will help speed the region's 1.5 million people through the bus and rail service.

■ MINSTERLY Motors has put its wide-bodied Jubilee Renault Master (Coach and Bus Week, September 26) on its service linking Sundorne Retail Park and Monkmoore in Shrewsbury. The vehicle features high-backed coach seating and an electrically-operated passenger step.

■ P & O European Ferries' Felixstowe subsidiary has become the first ferry company to achieve the BS5750 quality standard.
The company - which runs Felixstowe-Zeebrugge, Felixstowe-Europoort and Cairnryan-Larne routes - spent several months auditing aspects of its quality on its seven ships before it was approved by Bureau Veritas Quality International.
"Achieving this award will enhance our position in the industry and prove to our customers that, every time they travel with us, they can be guarnateed of experiencing the same high standards," said managing director John Plamer.

Marriott Hotels contract to Ralphs Coaches

COACH

Ralphs wins five year airport deal

By Andrew Jarosz

LANGLEY-based Ralphs Coaches has won a five-year contract for airport shuttles on behalf of Marriott Hotel Slough, which has called for five new high-spec Optare StarRiders to be bought.

Ralphs' managing director Patrick Burke said this was Marriott's first venture into courtesy coaches in the UK, although use was widespread worldwide.

"They've just taken over the hotel from the Holiday Inn group and the contract may be the first of many."

The five Mercedes 811D-chassied StarRiders are fitted with 27 coach seats and air conditioning.

They have a wide entrance, luggage pen and capacious boot. Three coaches are being used on services linking terminals one to three at Heathrow and two link up with terminal four.

They take the size of the Ralphs fleet, which is involved in considerable work at London's three airports, to over the 40 mark.

COACH

Meters cancelled for Xmas shopping

COACH meters in Park Lane have been cancelled for the Christmas shopping season in London.

Between November 23 and December 30, Park Lane will be used exclusively for setting down and picking up, says the Metropolitan Police. Coach drivers have been warned to time pick-ups accurately, as waiting time will be severely restricted.

To compensate for the Park Lane restrictions, special permission has been given by the bailiff of the Royal Parks to use North Carriage Drive for additional coach set-down/pick-up until 8 pm during the same period.. Coaches must enter from Victoria Gate and exit via Cumberland Gate.

Operators have been asked to warn drivers to avoid using Hanover Square, and to remind them that Oxford Street is closed to coaches from Monday to Saturday, 8 am to 7 pm. When traffic is heavy during the Christmas lights period, Oxford Street will be closed, and drivers are asked to make contingency plans if this happens.

Further details of London coach parking can be obtained from Sergeant Robert Pilbeam, on 071 230 5332.

BUS

Heatons Travel boosts its midibus fleet

GREATER Manchester independent Heatons Travel of Leigh has increased its midibus fleet with the purchase of two long-wheelbase Optare MetroRiders. The purchase follows on from receipt of a short-wheelbase MetroRider which has proved popular with passengers and drivers.

Managing director John Heaton said that, apart from one single-deck bus, the remaining 10 vehicles in the fleet were all midibuses.

"We're expanding gradually and have managed to buy two additional new buses of different makes every year since 1988.

"We've completed a move to larger premises in the town and have established ourselves well on local commercial and tendered routes," he said.

The two 31-seat MetroRiders are designed to comply fully with GMPTE tendered bus specification and feature a host of DiPTAC-approved features including entrance lights over the door.

Heatons has taken two MetroRiders

COACH

Shearings intake

COACHING giant Shearings is to take the first of its 1993 vehicle intake in October. The order for 45 units is 100 per cent Van Hool/Volvo (*Coach and Bus Week*, September 26) with 20 coaches having air conditioning (left). Thirty-five of the coaches, including the air-conditioned ones, will be used on continental holidays, with the remainder being confined to the UK tour programme. The B10M GL chassis specification includes a THD 101GD 273 bhp engine and a ZF S6-85 six-speed synchro gearbox.

COACH AND BUS

Blazefield's first deckers

SIX Northern Counties-bodied Leyland Olympians allocated to Yorkshire Coastliner at Malton are the first new full-size buses purchased by Blazefield Holdings since it was set up last year to take over the remaining interests of the AJS Group.

The Olympians have 70 dual-purpose seats for the Leeds to Scarborough route, which forms the core of the subsidiary's activities.

Similar to the batch of Olympians delivered two years ago to Keighley and District, these buses are the first with the Cummins L10 engine coupled to ZF gearbox and will replace some of the existing seven-year-old Olympians which will be cascaded to the Keighley fleet for bus duties.

Blazefield chairman Giles FearnleyH said the new vehicles were a sound investment. "It takes a while for the benefits of new purchases to flow through to the balance sheet but the cost can almost be justified on maintenance savings alone." CBW

Coastliner's new Olympians

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BUS

Four more LBL garages close

By Richard Simpson

LONDON Buses subsidiary companies are to close four more garages early next March, bringing the number of LBL garages shut since the 1984 London Regional Transport Act to 21.

East London is to shut its Barking, Romford and Seven Kings garages, with operations being moved to a six-acre site in Chadwell Heath. The company's previously announced closure of the West Ham garage comes into force this Saturday.

CentreWest is transferring its midibus operations in Ealing from Hanwell garage to a new base at the London Borough of Ealing's Greenford depot. This is better situated for Ealing operations giving significant cost savings. Hanwell is to close, with the remaining double-deck buses moving to the Acton, Alperton and Uxbridge depots.

Managing director Peter Hendy said: "In the next two or three years CentreWest faces the most fundamental changes since the formation of London Transport - a move to individual contracts for all our routes, privatisation of the company and deregulation of bus services in London. We have no option but to reduce our costs if CentreWest is to survive as a fully independent company.

Peter Hendy

"We will be able to operate the midibus routes more economically from Greenford and the transfer of Hanwell's double-deck buses to other garages should improve their long-term viability too.

"These changes will not affect our customers as routes and frequency of services will not be altered. There will inevitably be some upheaval for our staff, and there will be some job losses, but most jobs will remain and should be more secure. We will now be entering into detailed discussions with all the trade unions to enable the changes to take place as smoothly as possible."

East London's new garage, to be built on a new site at the Freshwater Road Industrial Estate, Chadwell Heath, will also house the company's head office, which is currently based at Ilford.

Facilities at the six-acre site will include open parking for 250 buses, workshops, a new operations block with canteen facilities for 600 staff and the new head office.

The site closures and the opening of the new garage will reduce overheads, which East London says it has to do to remain competitive in the run-up to privatisation.

Transport & General Workers Union district officer Ken Fuller said: "To prepare themselves for sale, these two companies are being forced to abandon valuable infrastructure and move downmarket. It is almost inevitable that London Buses other subsidiaries will follow suit."

CentreWest is facing fundamental changes

BUS

Spectra for Metroline

LONDON Buses' second prototype Optare Spectra double decker has joined the Metroline Travel subsidiary company, with at least a year's trial on some of the company's heaviest trunk routes ahead of it.

Unlike the remainder of the LBL Spectra order which is destined for the London Central subsidiary, the 67 seater is built to a dual doorway layout and will be compared to MCW Metrobus double deckers.

Commercial director Graham Tennant said the company had the oldest fleet age profile of all the subsidiaries. "We have some of the oldest MCWs still in service and are eager to try out the new generation decker," he said.

The Spectra will operate from Cricklewood garage on the 16/16A routes from Victoria to Neasden and Oxford Circus to Brent Cross.

New Spectra has dual doors

BUS

Pressure rises...

THE Transport & General Workers Union has renewed its pre-election call for a public inquiry into the future of London public transport.

It is concerned at the recent spate of garage closures and that staff at London Buses subsidiaries may find wages and conditions under attack as pressure to contain costs grows.

District officer Ken Fuller said: "Given these developments, the time is obviously right for us to renew our campaigning activity. Just prior to the General Election, the Transport & General Workers Union and Capital Transport Campaign handed a 50,000-strong petition to the Department of Transport, calling for an independent public inquiry into London public transport.

"Those 50,000 signatures must now be seen as a modest first instalment."

...for public inquiry

TRANSPORT pressure group Capital is demanding an inquiry into transport in London. The demand is part of a two-pronged attempt to "inject some commonsense into the Government's transport policy for London."

The group is also working on a range of standards, covering service reliability and accessibility, safety and environmental factors which would apply to private and public sector operators on road and rail.

It also wants either a general inquiry by the Transport Select Committee into transport in London (the first for ten years) or a public inquiry.

Capital is appealing for backing from local authorities, community groups and trade unions. CBW

BUS

LT still pressing for early sales

LONDON Transport is progressing with the early privatisation of its eleven London Buses operating companies. An LT senior source said the organisation was currently engaged in discussions with the Department of Transport over ways in which the companies could be transferred to the private sector ahead of deregulation in the capital and that the Government remained committed to its manifesto deregulation pledges.

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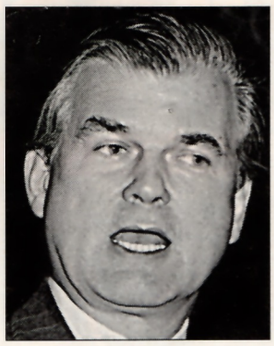
■ BUS AND RAIL

Freeman throws down the gauntlet



Roger Freeman

TRANSPORT Minister Roger Freeman has thrown down a challenge to local bus companies, inviting them to take an interest in the privatisation of British Rail.

On local radio in Manchester before addressing a conference at Manchester University, Mr Freeman said he expected most rail operations to be sold to other people movers. The Government currently plans to retain the railway infrastructure but to sell service operations to the private sector.

"I think The City has a role to play in financing the acquisition of rolling stock. In this country we lease ships, airlines, aircraft, coaches, buses, taxis, private cars, heavy goods vehicles, why not rolling stock? Why not trains? " he said.

"We are not talking about a public flotation. I don't think the city knows much about railway operations. As far as passenger services are concerned, the interest will come from the bus companies, from the airlines, from the ferry operators and other people movers."

Mr Freeman also hinted that Birmingham may soon get the go-ahead for building its rapid transit system.

"We did provide substantial help for Metrolink and we're doing the same in Sheffield and, in due course, it may be possible to help Birmingham."

■ COACH AND BUS

Invite to talk on rail

TIMETABLE specialist Pindar Graphics invites operators to a discussion on rail privatisation with transport minister Roger Freeman. The debate takes place as part of the Transport Seminar hosted by Pindar at the National Railway Museum on November 19. Other topics for discussion include deregulation and marketing, and the desktop publishing revolution's impact on timetable production.

Admission is by invitation only. Contact Melanie Crowther on 0723 362222.

■ COACH AND BUS

Statistics give a ray of hope

By Richard Simpson

STATISTICS for the last 10 years published by the Department of Transport paint a gloomy picture of declining bus patronage and rising car use since 1981.

But *Transport Statistics Great Britain 1992* also provides the industry with useful ammunition to campaign for greater support for the bus and coach industry.

Passenger journeys by bus and coach in Great Britain have declined from a pre-deregulation figure of 5,694 million in 1981 to 4,851 million in 1990-1991.

Because of deregulation and the trend towards mini and midibuses vehicle kilometres covered on local services has risen from 2,263 km in 1980 to 2,444 million kilometres in 1990-1991.

Road traffic is up 49 per cent with car use rising within this 53 per cent. The number of households with two or more cars is up from 15 per cent to 23 per cent.

The growth of road traffic has been at considerable environmental cost, with emissions of carbon monoxide from all road traffic up by 42 per cent to nearly six million tonnes per year between 1981 and 1990.

But bus patronage is holding up compared to other forms of road transport in spite of the recession. The trend towards rising car and road freight movements has been arrested in the last year. Goods transported by truck fell by five per cent, and car traffic levels remained virtually static.

In contrast, the number of passenger journeys by bus fell by under five per cent compared to an average annual decline of over ten per cent between 1980 and 1989-1990.

Non-local (ie coach) patronage appears to be on the increase in both short and long terms. Passenger journeys are up by over four per cent in the last year, and 11 per cent since 1980.

All in all, it seems that the road passenger transport industry is weathering the recession rather better than its freight counterpart.

Transport Statistics Great Britain 1992 is published by HMSO, price £24.

■ BUS

BCC welcomes priority calls

THE Bus & Coach Council has welcomed calls in the Buswatch report, A Passengers' View of Local Bus Services 1988-1992 (Coach and Bus Week, September 19) for more bus priority measures and a revision of the competition regulations to enable bus operators to co-ordinate services.

BCC director general Veronica Palmer said: "In many cases, bus companies want to co-operate on ticketing or other matters in the interests of passengers, but are prevented from doing so by the application of competition law which was developed for very different industries and was only extended to local bus services following deregulation."

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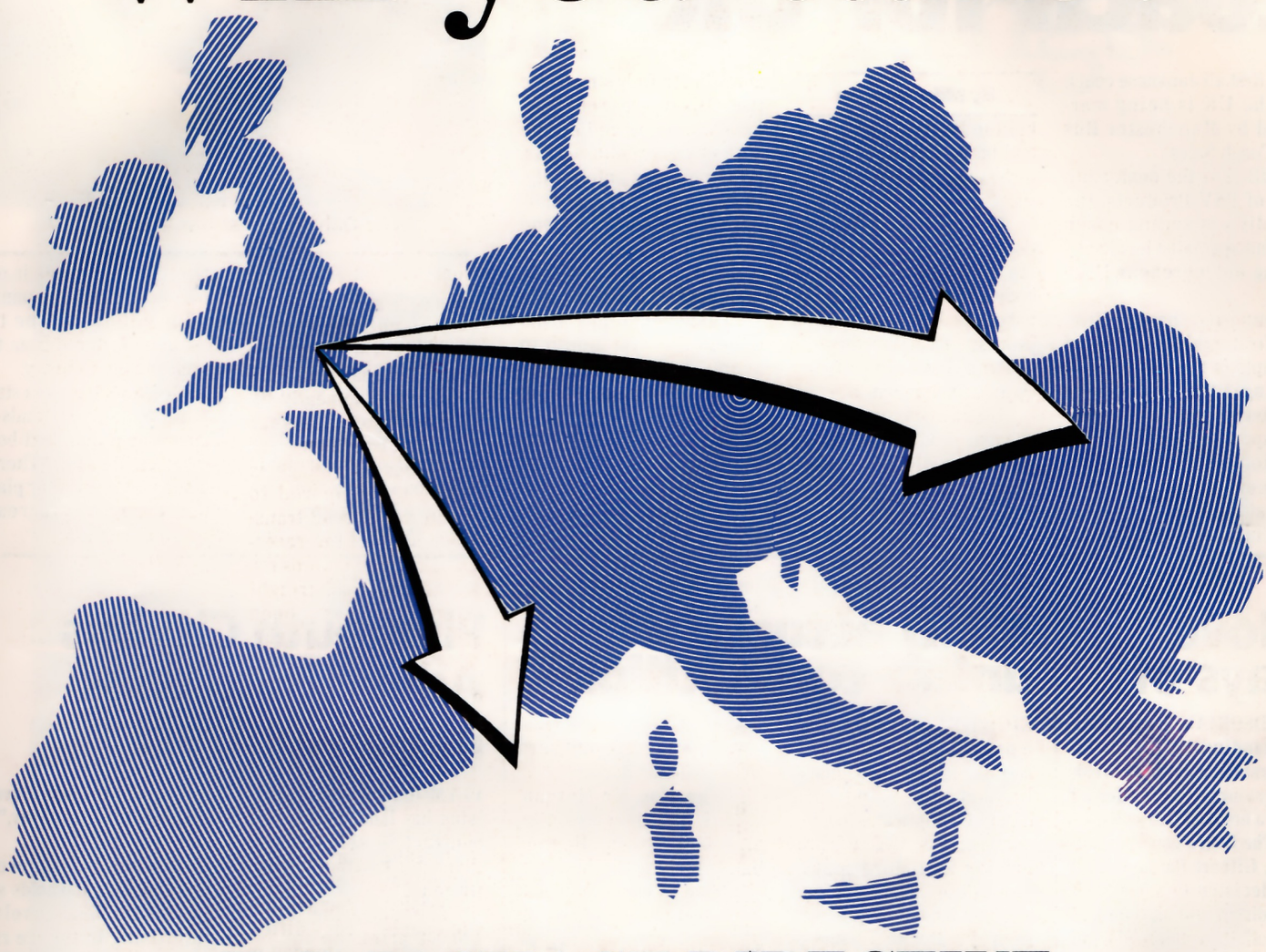

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COACH

First Japanese coach for UK

Mike Daly - success has attracted TV

THE first all-Japanese coach for the UK is being marketed by Manchester Bus and Coach Sales.

MBCS is the dealership arm of PSV Products, the rapidly expanding coach and bus specialist headed by young entrepreneur Mike Daly.

Imported through Eire, the first vehicle is a used example of the world's best-selling PSV, the Toyota Coaster.

Apart from minibus conversions, the only vehicle currently available to UK operators with a Japanese content is the Toyota Optimo

By Mike Morgan

built in Portugal by Caetano and based on a six-cylinder turbo-engined Coaster chassis.

Mr Daly plans to sell the Coaster as a complete vehicle with Japanese steel body. The first is being prepared for homologation - a process that will reduce its seating capacity to the Optimo's maximum, 21.

Initial prices will be cheaper than an equivalent Caetano-bodied coach, but the engine is the lower powered four-cylinder unit.

The Coaster is the latest move in Mr Daly's meteoric rise. His two-year-old business was launched on the back of video/audio repairs, but he quickly entered the second-hand minibus market. Success with one Sherpa 12 months ago was rapidly followed by multiple sales totalling over 100.

Turnover leapt from £400 in the first month to nearly £600,000 after 21 months with vehicle sales accounting for £375,000.

He moved up to larger vehicles either as agent for the vendor or as a conventional dealer. Vehicles are hired out to maximise income and, in a separate initiative, he has teamed up with Ray Hamer to offer a demountable screen for his on-coach bingo game complete with caller's microphone for £250.

His success has attracted the attention of Granada Television's *Flying Start* programme which is geared to finding the best new enterprise. PSV Products is one of 32 shortlisted companies and is believed to be the first to be featured from the coach and bus industry.

Mr Daly's business strategy relies more on hands-on management than text book strategies. He said: "There's no need for a five-year plan - you plan to increase turnover don't you."

COACH

Move pays off

WINDSORIAN is reporting outstanding results for its excursions and short break programme, relaunched after a break of five years.

The firm's general manager, Gilbert Parsons, said the decision to move back into direct-sale tourism had paid off, the collapse of Land Travel and other tour operations contributing to good business from holidaymakers in Windsor and Slough.

"Next year, we are looking at a limited programme of extended tours. The direction our fleet takes depends very much on what happens this winter," he said.

BUS

M&D accused of unfair competition

EIGHT-BUS Maidstone independent Bygone Buses is claiming that Maidstone & District is using off-timetable duplicates to wipe out its profits. Bygone's proprietor Ken Morgan says new routes he registered were under unfair pressure from M & D within hours of the start, and has lodged formal complaints with the traffic commissioner.

M & D's operations director Roger Davis says it's a case of the kettle calling the pot black, and says his company is more than happy to answer any allegations to the traffic commissioner. "We see Ken Morgan as creaming off our services," said Mr Davis.

"The way Mr Morgan sees it, he can come on to my cabbage patch. He can, but, if I protect it, he can't complain. I've not only got to protect the livelihood of my staff, I've also got to protect the industry.

"There is talk of Maidstone becoming pedestrianised. Long term, I want to see buses the only vehicles going through the town, and any kind of bus war may jeopardise that possibility. But I'll happily co-exist with anyone."

BUS

Plymouth Citybus Advertising wins major contract

PLYMOUTH Citybus Advertising has landed a two-year contract to sell space in Plymouth Pavilion's What's On guide.

The magazine has a 120,000 print run and is a major coup for PCA - one of only a few in-house bus company advertising sales operations. Pavilion head of sales and marketing Richard Willoughby said the choice of PCA was a natural one.

"We trawled locally for an agency with local and national advertising sales access, and Citybus Advertising has that capability," he said.

Citybus commercial manager Rick Reynolds said part of the deal involved advertising in the ice rink with "an exciting new advertising concept" which will "blow some minds."

"It is spectacular and has only been done once before in the United Kingdom," he said. Consultancy contracts are being negotiated with United Kingdom bus companies, he added.

Some of the last new Paramounts

COACH

More Scanias for Traction

BARNSLEY-based Yorkshire Traction has taken delivery of three Scania K93 coaches. The Plaxton-bodied vehicles join eight Scania coaches already in the company fleet and will be primarily used on the company's Coachlink group of tours and excursions.

Reputed to be the last Plaxton Paramount 3500-bodied Scanias with continental doors available, the coaches are being fitted with toilets and a servery before entering service.

Traction's coaching manager John Stubbins said income was holding up well because the company had a wide portfolio of leisure activities. "We still can't compete against people down the road who quote ridiculous rates which do not cover operating costs.

"Private hire organisers now ring up and say can you beat so and so's quote, not what is your rate for the job?"

Traction is currently taking five Wright-bodied K93 buses (*Coach and Bus Week*, September 12). CBW

Flights now specialise in double bookings.

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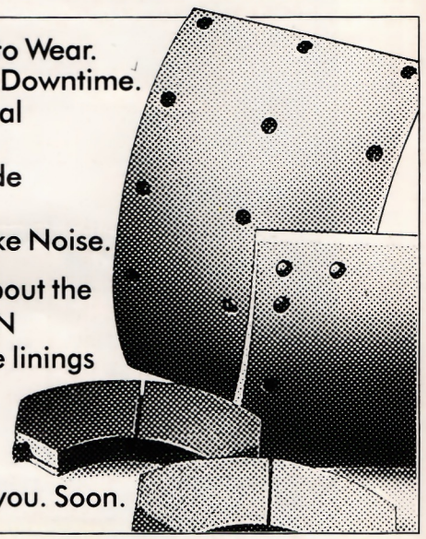

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1987 (D) LEYLAND TIGER 260 DUPLE 340. 48 recliners, rear sunken toilet, boiler, fridge, video, cont. door.

1986 (C) DAF SB2300 DHS PLAXTON PARAMOUT 3200. 49 recliners, sunken toilet, single glazed.

1986 (C) VOLVO B10M CAETANO ALGARVE, 49/53 seats, centre toilet, TV and video, courier seat, blinds.

1985 (C) DAF MB 230 LAG GALAXY. High floor, 49/53 demountable, sunken rear toilet, TV & video, boiler, bunk, double glazed, Webasto, carpets & curtains, retrimmed throughout in brown. Finished in white.

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Tide turns on deregulation

TWO of the more interesting points brought out by Alan Cannell in his presentation on the South American transport scene confound present thinking on deregualtion.

In Brazil, competition was more sophisticated, it was about the efficiency of operators, not which bus could race to the next stop first.

He suggested that London's route franchising was close to the successful Brazilian system, much to the chagrin of audience member BCC director general Veronica Palmer, who supports deregulation for London.

In Chile, the 'successful' deregulation, oft instanced by Nicholas Ridley as justification for the 1985 Transport Act, is currently being reversed.

Quantity licensing is being introduced on Santiago streets and operators with new full-size buses are being given preference over minibus operators with jitneys. Furthermore all companies will soon have to comply with Californian emission levels on new buses or lose their licence.

Any comments Professor Hibbs?

Tiger set to cause a stir

A MONSTER tiger is set to pounce at one of Britain's busiest motorway service areas this week.

The giant Siberian tiger, the biggest in the world at over 90 feet ong and 33 feet tall, will dwarf the famous Severn Bridge when it arrives at the Aust Pavilion service area on the M4.

"It will cause a bit of a stir," said Aust Pavilion general manager Tom Cassidy. It is hoped that one of the inflatable cat's young admirers doesn't stick a pin in a vulnerable part otherwise the tiger will disappear towards oblivion with the same speed as the British bus industry's manufacturing capacity.

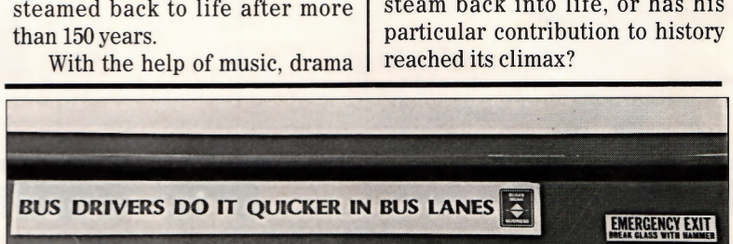
David Mellor misses a steamy experience

FORMER Heritage Minister and star of Parliament, tabloids and Spitting Image, the Right Honourable David Mellor, was billed as the guest of honour at Manchester's Museum of Science and Industry last Friday.

He was due to step back in time and ride the footplate of Planet - a locomotive that has steamed back to life after more than 150 years.

With the help of music, drama and a full-scale reproduction of the famous steam engine, Mr Mellor should have joined the invited guests as they sampled the thrilling atmosphere of the day when the Planet first steamed into the history books.

It is a shame he was forced to resign before the event. We wonder how long it will be before Mr Mellor's political activities will steam back into life, or has his particular contribution to history reached its climax?



Rear window stickers displayed on Thamesdown midibus which could be misconstrued if read together

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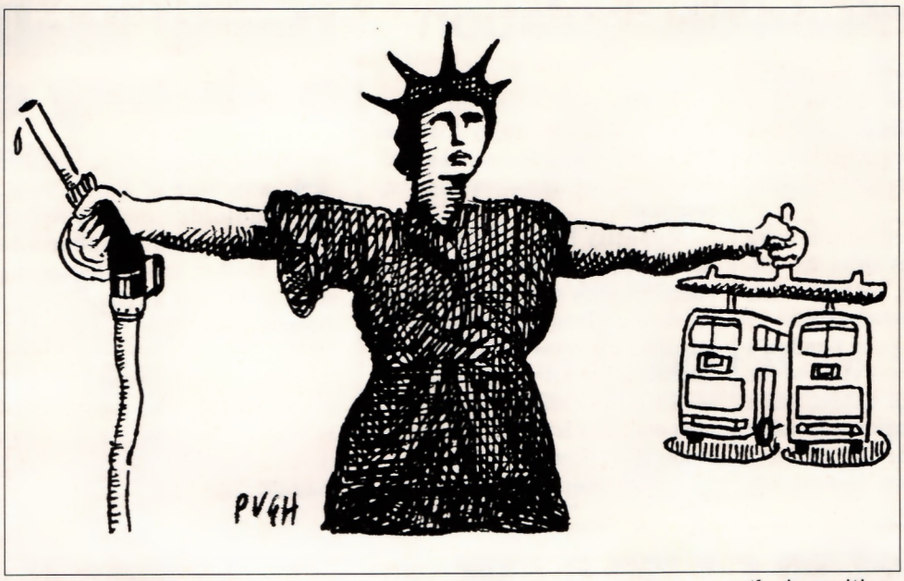

A matter for the courts...

I HOPE that columnists are permitted to change their minds, for I now have reservations about my previously expressed opinion regarding Section 111 of the Transport Act 1985.

The effect of this section is to allow traffic commissioners to order repayment of 20 per cent of the fuel duty rebate paid to an operator in the previous three months where the operator has failed to operate a registered local service, or has operated a local service in a way that significantly contravenes the registration regulations.

I was one of many people who considered that this should be altered to permit deduction of a maximum of 20 per cent of the quarterly fuel duty rebate, rather than the all-or-nothing requirement of the Act.

The arguments are well rehearsed: the harshness of the present law makes it virtually unused, especially as the effective 'fine' for an identical transgression, increases in direct proportion to the total bus service mileage operated.

Whispers reach me that there is growing pressure for the legislation to be amended to give a sliding scale discretion to the commissioners. While this does have apparent merits, to which I had previously subscribed, I now have reservations.

For a change of this sort would expose traffic commissioners to a wholly new power which, with the greatest respect, I suggest goes beyond the competence of themselves and Traffic Area staff to execute.

Although it is generally accepted that commissioners have "disciplinary" powers over operators, this word does not appear in the relevant legislation.

Critical examination of their powers and duties reveals a basic need for them to be satisfied about repute, competence, finance and maintenance; together with the safety and reliability of bus service operation.

If events occur that cause the commissioner to not be satisfied on any of these heads, he has a range of powers available to limit the scope of the operator to a level of activity at which he, the commissioner, can be satisfied that the undertakings given in the operator licence application will be honoured; including licence revocation (or a ban on service registrations) if the operation is incapable of attaining the necessary satisfaction thresholds.

The effect of these powers is only "discipline" in the sense of the re-establishment of conduct which complies with the rules, of bringing in to line, or of maintaining order. It is not a discipline of imposing sanctions, penalties or punishments as such, even though the effect on the operation might work as if it were a chastisement.

Put another way, the decision-making process is not: 'a crime has been committed, what is the appropriate penalty?' It is: 'this operation no longer satisfies criteria x, y and z, what action has to be taken to re-attain the legally necessary satisfaction?'

Even the inflexible terms of Section 111 can be construed as making legal and reliable operation of services a condition precedent to full rebate of fuel duty, even though, as with a fleet size reduction on an O-licence, there is an effective penalty too.

But to allow commissioners to apply the effect of Section 111 on a sliding scale, according to the degree of the offence and the effect of the 'penalty' on the operator according to his size and strength; is to turn it into a punitive fine, with the maximum (which could be petty cash or tens of thousands of pounds) not directly fixed by statute, but dependent on the size of the operator. I doubt whether there is any precedent in UK law for the latter, but it is the changing of commissioners from a controlling authority into one empowered to impose direct fines that concerns me.

For this is surely the proper task of the courts, where judges or stipendiary magistrates have legal qualifications, or lay magistrates are advised by legally qualified clerks on the precedents for the imposition of sanctions.

The lack of legal expertise at a traffic commissioner's public inquiry gives, I suggest, legitimate cause for concern about the ability to properly and consistently impose fines of this nature and possible magnitude.

The 'Buses' White Paper on deregulation proposed that transgressions of local bus registration regulations should invoke criminal sanctions.

This was not pursued in the Act, and I argued with the then Secretary of State, David Mitchell, that this weakening was undesirable.

I now think that, if any 'sliding scale' revision of Section 111 is made, its application should be moved from the traffic commissioners into the courts.

If, as expected, the UK implementation of the EC Directive on package tour operation criminalises the issue of a brochure that fails to spell out the tourist category of an hotel or the date by which a holiday balance payment will have to be made; is there any good reason why doing naughty things with bus services should not fall in to the same basket?

Write right now

I UNDERSTAND that many operators acted on my suggestion in Coach and Bus Week on September 12, and have written to their Members of Parliament giving reasons why the UK implementation of the EC Directive on Package Tours and Bonding should be delayed.

I would urge anyone who put this aside to do later, to do it right now. As I said at the time, it may not work, but it is certainly worth a try.

Sale of badges by Traffic Areas was an ill-conceived idea

AS most operators are now aware, the Traffic Areas have sold off their un-issued stocks of PSV drivers' badges on the open market. Many are already in use to provide free meals for the wives and friends of some dishonest drivers and some of the less scrupulous of the bus-spotting fraternity. It can only be matter of time before a badged-up bus nut decides to 'borrow' a bus to try it out, or even (again, for it has happened before) purloin a coach to actually operate a National Express service. The risk to public safety is quite frightening.

This is going to cause considerable pain to the industry and the catering establishments that have traditionally fed and watered our drivers. I bet the gross revenue from this ill-conceived sale would not pay the cost of building a single yard of motorway slip road!

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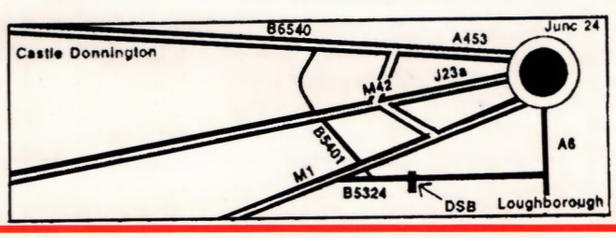

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1989	F	DAF Plaxton 3200 DH, 57
1989	F	DAF SB2305DHTD Plaxton 3200 DH, 57
1987	E	DAF MB230DKFL Plaxton 3200, 52 + toilet
1987	D	DAF SB2300DHS Plaxton 3500, 49R + toilet
1986	D	SB2305DHTD Plaxton 3200, low driver, 55E
1986	D	DAF MB200 Plaxton 3500, 49R + toilet
1990	G	SCANIA K93 Van Hool, 51R + toilet
1985		SCANIA K112 Jonckheere P599, 51R + toilet
1984	A	SCANIA K112 Van Hool Alizee, 51R + toilet
1983	Y	BEDFORD YNT, 12m Duple Dominant, 53
1987	D	BOVA FUTURA, 49R + toilet
1985		BOVA FUTURA, 57R
1979	T	AEC 760 Plaxton Supreme, 53

Points of concern

From George Wright

SIR

I read with great interest your road test of the Optare Spectra because we are set to witness them on the streets of Lambeth as a result of London Buses' proposal to convert route 3 to driver-only operation. To date, the bus seems to have received nothing but praise and Lambeth Public Transport Group (LPTG) readily acknowledges that it contains many features which put it streets ahead of its rivals. But there are two points which concern us.

The decision to place the single-doored Spectra on an extremely busy inner/central London route which is at present - and for good reason - operated by Routemasters and conductors. Many people who know and use route 3 were surprised when they heard of the decision. Even some managers within LBL have expressed reservations to us about the potential for boarding and alighting difficulties.

LPTG is not seeking to rubbish the Optare Spectra and we warmly welcome the introduction of new buses in London. But we do believe that route 3 is the wrong route for these vehicles. With hundreds of LBL's existing OPO fleet nearing the end of their 'shelf life', the Spectra should be replacing them. Moreover, any trial to assess the pros and cons of a single-door vehicle in the capital should not be undertaken on an intensely busy inner/central London service, which has only just lost its conductors.

Finally, according to LBL, a typical conversion to OPO adds an average of 2.3 minutes to journey times and loses passengers at the rate of £200 worth per day. The route 3 OPO conversion was forced upon LBL because of continued Government pressure to reduce costs - the same Government which calls buses the "jewel in London's crown" and continually states its desire to make the bus more attractive to passengers. Such statements simply don't add up in reality.

George Wright
Joint co-ordinator
Lambeth Public Transport Group
13/15 Stockwell Road
London SW9

Green campaign not balanced

From Graham Smith

SIR

Friends of the Earth's campaign on 'cleaner buses' (*Coach and Bus Week*, September 19) backfired due to the failure to present a balanced case.

Every form of motorised transport produces pollution and buses are clearly no exception. However, whatever criteria are used, buses come out as more environmentally friendly than cars, and a shift towards public transport is the only means of seriously tackling the linked problems of urban congestion and pollution.

Friends of the Earth's belated plea that they are pro public transport conflicts with the fact that they produced a report on bus emissions with no reference whatsoever to emissions from other vehicles. It was not surprising, therefore, that the way the campaign was presented by many journalists depicted the bus as the problem, rather than the solution.

Indeed, it would be naive to have thought that the report would be treated in any other way, and equally naive to believe that the Bus & Coach Council would not respond. During prelaunch contacts with Friends of the Earth, BCC made it clear that, if the campaign was seen as anti-bus, we would rigorously rebut any such conclusions. As it turned out, this is exactly what happened.

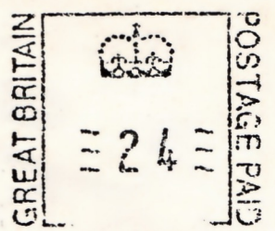
Perhaps the most difficult thing for Friends of the Earth to accept is that they are no longer the sole source of environmental wisdom.

As a victim of their success in bringing the issues to the fore, they must now realise that many businesses are keenly interested in the environment and prepared to meet the challenges of ever-higher standards demanded by society. Indeed, BCC has led the way on asking for increased powers for traffic commissioners to provide greater enforcement of standards.

However, in raising the standards, Government must accept some responsibility for finding the additional money required to meet such standards (as recommended by the European Commission).

Friends of the Earth's report could have been helpful in identifying the true costs of pollution control but, because of the unbalanced presentation, this important point has been overshadowed.

Graham Smith
President
Bus & Coach Council
Sardinia House
52 Lincoln's Inn Fields
London WC2A 3LZ



Write to: The Editor, *Coach and Bus Week*, EMAP Response Publishing Ltd, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough, PE1 1DS, or by fax: 0733 62656

The editor is always pleased to receive letters for publication in *Coach And Bus Week* and will, if requested, publish these anonymously. But please attach your name and address for our own information.

We should not have to write to our MPs

From An Operator

SIR

I write with regard to Marksman's article on bonding. I wholeheartedly agree that the time scale we are to be given to implement bonding is too short.

Everyone with any conscience believes the customer should be protected, but I wonder why the cost should be passed on to the coach/tour operator.

Surely a more sensible alternative would be a levy made directly to the public by a surcharge on every holiday, this could be put into a central fund and regulated by a suitable body to be used in the event of any collapse.

The timescale for such a complicated and important issue gives little chance of a unified comprehensive scheme being adopted.

I wonder when this industry will ever have a trade body that recognises in advance and fights for all issues that present costs to operators without any forthcoming relief in Government grants etc to compensate their implementation.

We have no bargaining power and are lost in a sea of endless legislation which invariably costs money to the operator.

Understanding what Government legislation is coming next in our industry is not enough, a trade body should have the guts to unite membership and stop the many burdens we have had forced upon us.

We should not have to write to an MP when a good trade body in touch with its members could have set out a better timescale, for the better of everyone concerned.

What worries me is what comes next.

Name and Address Supplied

Night-Bus operation

From Francis Hearne

SIR

With reference to a letter from Norman Peters (Coach and Bus Week, September 19) regarding the operation of Night-Bus services in London, there has been an operator other than London Buses.

Service N99 was operated by Ensignbus on behalf of London Transport from 1987 to 1991, between Chadwell Heath and Cranham via Romford.

This service consisted of three single journeys on Friday and Saturday evenings.

The service has since been withdrawn.

Francis Hearne
Redland Road
Redland
Bristol
BS6 6YG

Didn't EuroDisney know importance of coaches?

From Steve Paine

SIR

I write regarding the EuroDisney article (*Coach and Bus Week*, September 19).

When EuroDisney was being built, surely the appropriate people realised that the punters would arrive in coaches? This is obvious by the fact that a coach park had been provided. To the best of my knowledge, coaches are driven by flesh and blood real live people rather than by robots, so why were drivers not catered for to start with?

I have been a PCV driver since June 1984 and in this time I have taken punters to more places than I care to try to recall. Virtually all of these places realise the important part that drivers play, and usually allow him or her to gain free entry.

Several places provide the driver with either free or heavily subsidised meals and beverages. At Twycross Zoo, I was given free entry and a subsidised meal and, at The American Adventure, free entry, subsidised meal, and as many rides on the attractions as I wanted.

The American Adventure also provides drivers with a rest room containing satellite TV, and a reasonably-priced drinks machine, which actually dispenses drinkable tea. Also there is a book for drivers to sign and suggest any improvements that could be made. I know for a fact that the management read the comments and act on them. Surely a concern like EuroDisney could have thought of doing something like this?

As regards the French authorities singling out British coaches for spot checks, this may be sour grapes on their part.

There is a public weighbridge at Crick, just off junction 18 of the M1, where regular checks are made on lorries and coaches that are pulled off the motorway. Significantly, more foreign than British vehicles are found to contravene weight limits and construction and use regulations. I rest my case!

Steve Paine
Glassthorpe Lane
Harpole
Northampton

No mention of buses to Expocoach

From John Smith

SIR

I was pleased to receive an invitation from the organisers to the forthcoming Expocoach 92 at the International Exhibition Centre at Donington Park included with a recent issue of Coach and Bus Week.

On the reverse of the invitation, I found particulars of the nearest rail stations and airport but no mention of how to get there by coach and bus!

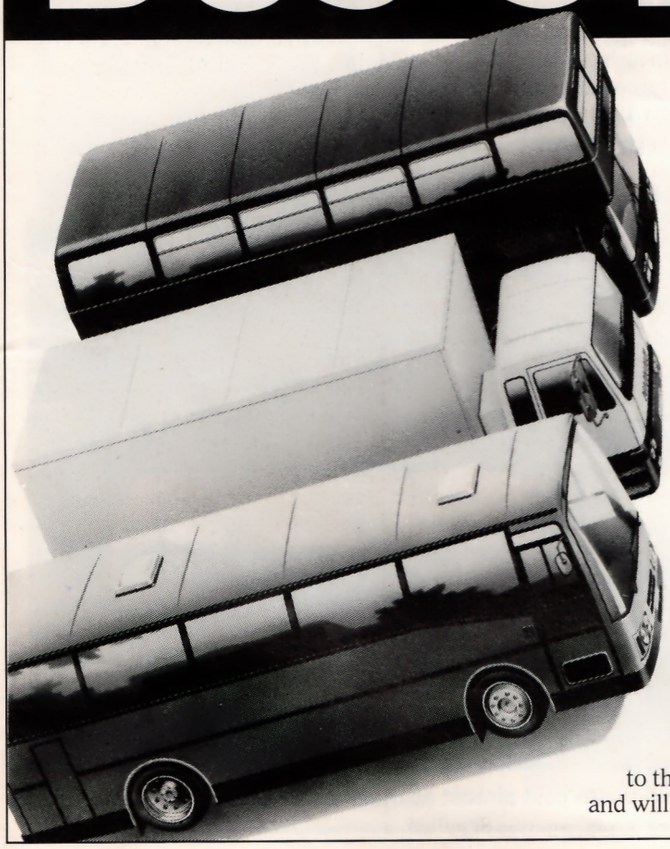
Perusal of the National Express Coach Guide showed one suitable timing from Coventry to East Midlands Airport and back but nothing direct from anywhere else.

However, a telephone call to Leicestershire County Council Busline brought me a bus map and a timetable showing a convenient hourly bus service from Leicester, Loughborough and Derby to Donington Park.

I for one will use this bus service when I go to the Expocoach 92 exhibition, to see how the buses perform in public service as well as under exhibition conditions.

John Smith
Old Deer Park Gardens
Richmond
Surrey

BUS STOPPED?



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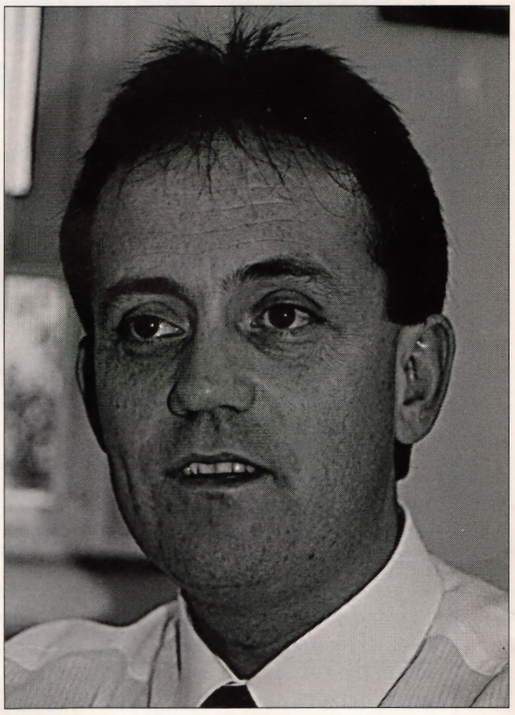
SPECIAL

SYT reveals the cost of engineering



Bernard Keane

Mike Morgan talks to Bernard Keane associate director (engineering)

SOUTH Yorkshire Transport's associate director (engineering) Bernard Keane threw down the gauntlet when he challenged the amount of detail supplied by operators for Maintenance Diary. He suggested a detailed analysis and cost comparison for the seven vehicles under test closely followed by a technical bashing of the poor performers in the group (*Coach and Bus Week*, September 5).

As promised we took up the challenge and asked Mr Keane to demonstrate the SYT system which he claimed could produce this amount of detail at the touch of a button.

SYT has 800 vehicles in its Mainline fleet tagged. Nothing is spent on engineering without a record being fed into its Fleet Activity Control Technology. FACT is a neat acronym for a system that highlights every aspect of fleet maintenance costs by vehicle age and type, and provides information to predict the optimum vehicle replacement profile. It gives management facts to make objective business decisions.

Computer system has the answer

The system breaks down maintenance costs so that problem areas can be identified. Vehicles, garages, staff and individual routes come under the microscope. Mr Keane said: "The system is the tool which gives information and spotlights decisions to be made which have the potential to save money."

Hardware was supplied by EDP of Sheffield and Wise Software of Stratford upon Avon produced the software. Refined, and subsequently purchased by SYT, FACT is now available on the open market. The detail from this dedicated engineering computerised record system produces the ultimate maintenance diary report.

Before 1986 the SYT operation had a high-cost profile hiding behind a £60 million annual subsidy which supported the "Socialist Republic of South Yorkshire's" cheap fares policy.

Deregulation brought with it a 250 per cent fare rise and passenger numbers tumbled. Engineering absorbed £12 million a year and the economic reality of commercial operation forced this 'black hole' into focus. Mr Keane explained: "It was obvious to us that we'd have to look into things so we started looking for a system that would give us full in-house costings.

"The operating side was already in the forefront of computerised developments, yet there was nothing on the engineering side.

"Meanwhile competition turned attention away from the problem until 1988 when a separate engineering structure was established."

FACT identifies the best bus in terms of cost. It reveals variation in costs between individual vehicles and between different garages. Parts and time are allocated and the data is used to pinpoint problem areas. For example, a close examination of body costs can identify one route and managers can then pinpoint a section of road responsible for excessive damage.

With £2 million pruned off the engineering budget over three years, FACT has repaid its development costs. Included in this is £200,000 on unclaimed warranty payments.

It is no surprise that vehicle costs rise over time, but FACT can identify the optimum time to sell and replace. However, Mr Keane is under no illusion that maintenance savings alone justify new buses. He said: "If you use that alone you'd never replace your fleet. But you've got to buy new vehicles oth-

Dodge minibuses cost almost as much as a decker

erwise you would get to the point where you'd never be able to afford to replace.

"New buses have operational advantages. Quicker turn round reduces journey times. Also they are an essential marketing tool. Passengers are leaving in droves to their car and with new vehicles fitting the image of a high quality product you are more likely to attract people back than with old buses."

SYT has a much improved fleet profile thanks to its recent intake of 115 Volvo single-decks and 100 minis. However vehicle buying decisions are much more complex than simply looking at the FACT experience. While keeping an eye on the commercial world and operating requirements, purchase deals are geared to the complex interface of factors - not least of which are the terms of lease and warranty.

Once the vehicles are on the road FACT comes into its own. Data is available which enables management to make decisions which have the potential to save money. In practice the operating side of the business is allowed to get on with the business of providing a service which meets passenger needs and remains responsive to competition. It asks the engineering division for vehicles and in return the FACT system gives the costs - down to the last penny.

Information can be extracted in tabulated form, or a choice of graphical representations. In Mr Keane's words: "What you put in you can get out." Consequently he has his finger on the pulse. He can identify improved efficiency which is reflected in reduced labour and parts costs per bus. In November 1990 labour accounted for nearly £750 and parts £375. Twelve months later these had fallen to around £580 and £230 respectively.

Close examination of maintenance cost per month by vehicle types reveals that Dodge minibuses are costing nearly as much as a Dennis Dominator to keep on the road, whereas a new Volvo is considerably cheaper. For example the first batch of 50 Alexander-bodied Volvo B10M single-decks cost £169.21 per bus, three generations of Dodge cost £534.16, £347.42 and £185.91, whereas the Dennis Dominator averaged £574.17. When split between the eight SYT garages, further variations can be seen. Dominators at Herries consume more parts than the others whereas Halfway vehicles use less.

System users can delve further into the statistics and question why Doncaster Dominators wear out stearing/axle components quicker than most or why Rotherham garage spends more on its engines.

● **Next week: The final report from our seven Maintenance Diary volunteers.**

Maintenance cost £574.14 per month

MATERIAL COSTS
February to May 1992
DENNIS DOMINATOR - Average per garage per month

Description	Halfway	Doncaster	Rotherham	Herries	Overall
Bearings	0.88	1.69	2.03	1.39	1.49
Electrical	22.55	41.87	44.59	44.59	38.4
Engine	27.90	22.39	31.58	24.13	26.50
Gearbox	4.55	4.13	5.41	4.17	4.57
TBox/ADrive	4.58	1.81	3.61	4.33	3.58
Axles/Steering	38.48	59.71	48.87	50.51	49.39
Chassis	20.11	9.93	16.19	18.74	16.24
Air	39.42	45.40	48.35	59.77	48.23
Heating/Cooling	25.26	18.55	16.76	16.11	19.17
Body	11.00	8.83	10.96	14.29	11.27
TOTALS	194.73	214.31	228.64	238.01	218.92

TOTAL ENGINEERING COSTS
Period 7 1991 to period 3 1992
Average per vehicle type

Type	No	Cost
AN68/Voith	12	£312.70
AN68/Voith	32	£575.60
Volvo Mk1	50	£169.21
Volvo Mk 2	40	£145.71
Fastline Metrobus	20	£655.69
Fastline Dennis	20	£681.86
Dodge Mk1	50	£534.16
Dodge Mk2	65	£347.42
Dodge Mk3	50	£251.63
Dodge Mk4	39	£185.91
Dennis	297	£574.17
Metrobus	52	£440.34
DAB Artic	13	£353.76

LABOUR
January to September 1992
Hours per bus per month

SYT type	Fleet nos	Average hours/bus
AN68/Voith	1681-1774	40.0
AN68/Voith	1775-1836	38.7
Volvo Mk1	601-650	15.1
Volvo Mk2	651-690	13.5
Fastline Metrobus	1941-1960	39.3
Fastline Dennis	2471-2490	46.8
Dodge Mk1	101-189	39.4
Dodge Mk2	190-254	28.5
Dodge Mk3	301-350	20.6
Dodge Mk4	351-390	18.0
Dennis	2101-2470	40.8
Metrobus	1846-1940	33.1
DAB artic	2001-2013	40.9

SYT's Volvo fleet has cut engineering costs

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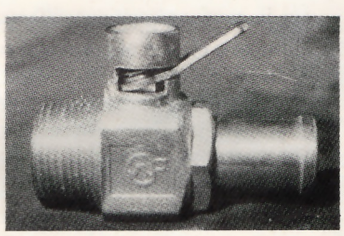

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Buying out your own business

Managers often yearn to own the company they work for. But how do they go about it, and what are the pitfalls? Philip Craig explains

A MANAGEMENT buyout is simply the purchase of a business from its owners by the management of that business. But it is not as straightforward as that - the management team, normally with no income but their managers' salaries - can seldom afford to buy a business worth several million pounds.

A whole industry has grown up to enable managers to have access to the finance and professional expertise needed for a buyout. It is estimated that there have been some 4,000 management buyouts with an aggregate value of £25 billion since 1980.

The attraction of a buyout to managers is independence and the knowledge that, as part owners, they are more in charge of their own destiny and can more directly influence their own wealth. Experience has shown that this independence and knowledge frequently releases an energy that results in enhanced performance and hence an increase in the value of the business. It is the expectation of this enhanced value that attracts financial backers to fund the buyout.

Clearly a management buyout, now generally called an MBO, can only take place when the owner is prepared to sell, so it is crucial to know before too much effort and cash has been spent whether the owner is willing to sell or not.

Yet management may be reluctant to make an approach for fear of damaging a working relationship which will remain necessary if the owner does not sell. A discreet adviser can normally overcome that problem. If the business is for sale it is helpful in negotiations to understand why.

The attraction of a buyout to managers is independence and the knowledge that, as part owners, they are more in charge of their own destiny and can more directly influence their own wealth

The "management" who participate in an MBO can encompass only one or two top managers or can involve virtually the whole workforce, as was the case for National Freight Corporation.

A management team which believes that the owner is likely to sell its business should consider an MBO. An MBO represents the opportunity for the team members to work for themselves and to create significant personal wealth. The alternative may be for the business to be sold over its heads to a trade buyer who will "rationalise" it to make it repay the investment.

To succeed, a management team must believe in the future of the business under its stewardship, prefer a greater control over its own destiny and be prepared to take on the risks of ownership. It is important to recognise that there are risks in undertaking an MBO but proper advice will keep those risks to a sensible level.

The first step is to draw up a business plan. The first attempt may be only in outline but it should be in sufficient depth to enable the management team to clarify its thinking. The team needs to think about how the business will develop under its independent management and whether the change of ownership will deprive it of resources necessary to the business.

The resources might include head office management support or intra-group sales. Some are replaceable, others may not be. The first attempt should include financial forecasts to enable the team to judge, perhaps with expert advice, whether funds to finance the buyout should be available.

Remember , even today, there is competition between backers to finance the best projects, and there are often different ways of structuring the finance which can affect the risks and the rewards, and hence attractiveness, to investors and management.

The next step is to appoint advisers and then approach sources of funds, of which the MBO industry has many. It makes sense for the management team to appoint an independent financial adviser who can identify the source of funds whose representatives are most compatible with the management team.

An MBO is very demanding of management time and effort but the support and guidance of a good independent adviser can minimise those demands. After all, it remains important to continue to manage the business the team is seeking to buy. The independent adviser will also ensure that the interests of the management team are not subsumed to those of the fund provider.

The next step is to approach the owner and is to establish whether he will sell and to enter negotiations.

A primary aim should be to gain a period of exclusivity during which the owner will not entertain approaches from other parties. The purpose of this period of exclusivity is to re-assure management and its advisers that their efforts will not be frustrated at the last minute (when the costs, including time, are greatest) by a sale to another party.

If, nevertheless, the management team is in competition with a trade buyer, it may feel at a disadvantage. It will recognise that it has legal and moral obligations to the current owner which suggest that support must be given to the potential buyer. Expert advice can help ensure that those obligations are fulfilled without prejudicing the team's ability to bid successfully for the business..

Next the management team will refine its plans and the providers of funds will complete their "due diligence" - the process of checking that the deal is what it is supposed to be. Checks will be made on the management team, on the assets to be acquired, on the industry in which the business operates and a number of similar matters.

The terms of the deal will be negotiated and put into a legal form. While the interests of the providers of capital and the management team are the same for most aspects of these negotiations they diverge significantly over the role of and ownership by management. The amount of money to be put up by the managers and their resultant shareholdings will be one aspect under consideration.

Another will be the way the team's performance is reflected in the financial structure. Generally the structure of an MBO includes some form of "ratchet", which enables the management team's stake in the company to rise over time as performance targets are met or exceeded.

Although not all development capital institutions like ratchets, all recognise the importance of giving management the incentive to perform to their maximum. Experienced advisers can be invaluable to the team over these aspects of the deal's structure. After all, the investor has probably seen dozens of such deals before, the management team, never.

It is generally difficult to involve all employees as shareholders at the outset, not least because of the laws relating to the issue of shares to the public. However, the right structure can enable shares to be acquired at the outset for distribution more widely to employees later. The finance for the acquisition of such shares can be provided by the company and can be tax deductible.

An MBO is very demanding of management time and effort but the support and guidance of a good independent adviser can minimise those demands. After all, it remains important to continue to manage

This structure can be expanded, still with tax relief, to a market-making role which would enable employee shareholders to realise their investment at a fair value even during the first few years after the MBO when the shares will be unquoted.

The apparent final step is completion: the time when the legal agreements are signed and the management team becomes part owner of the business. In fact, the difficult part then starts: management must return to running the company full time and matching the expectations they have raised both in their own minds and with their financial partners!

Philip Craig is head of Corporate Finance at MM & K Limited, which provides a full range of corporate finance advice and specialises in projects such as MBOs.
Tel: 071 283 7200, Fax: 071 283 4119.

Kingfisher of Redditch has licence suspended

West Midland traffic commissioner John Mervyn Pugh has adjourned consideration of possible disciplinary action in the light of Mr Francis Elkins' maintenance record for the third time

THE licence and registered local services of Francis Elkins, trading as Kingfisher Bus & Coach Co, of Redditch, have been suspended with immediate effect, on grounds of public safety, by West Midland traffic commissioner John Mervyn Pugh.

The commissioner adjourned consideration of possible disciplinary action in the light of Mr Elkins' maintenance record for the third time.

When the initial hearing was adjourned at Mr Elkins' request, the commissioner restricted his licence to five specified vehicles which had recent MoT certificates.

It was adjourned further after allegations by Midland Red (West) Ltd and Stanley Pemberton, a director of Red Line Bus Co Ltd, of Bromsgrove, Mr Elkins' former partner, that he had been operating vehicles other than those specified.

When the hearing resumed, Midland Red (West) alleged that, since then Mr Elkins had continued to operate more buses than he was authorised to.

Norman Carless said that those interested in seeing Mr Elkins off the road seemed to be sparing no efforts to achieve their objective The extent of "spying", or "monitoring", had been considerable

For Mr Elkins, Norman Carless said that those interested in seeing him off the road seemed to be sparing no efforts to achieve their objective, and the licensing system and the commissioner were being expected to espouse their interests. The extent of "spying", or the modern word "monitoring", which was a sanitary word for it, had been considerable.

Mr Pugh said the allegation was that there were six vehicles regularly being used, including three vehicles that were not specified.

Midland Red claimed that observations on September 8 showed six vehicles were operating that morning, one of which had a notice saying "on hire to M Y Travel".

If he was satisfied that licence condition had been breached the licence would be revoked. Mr Carless said Mr Elkins had only had notice of the allegations in respect of one vehicle said to have been used on August 10.

Kenneth Mills, managing director of Midland Red, said that Mr Elkins could not physically run what he had to run with five vehicles.

William Hankin, a Midland Red (West) driver, said that, at 1.45 pm on August 10 he was driving from Astwood Bank to Redditch when he saw a blue and white Kingfisher Bedford coach approaching carrying a party of school children.

In reply to Mr Carless, Mr Hankin said that he was absolutely sure of the date. He did not know if other operators in the area had blue and white coaches.

They all knew which Kingfisher vehicles should be on the road. He realised that vehicle should not have been on the road and he reported it. He did not write the registration number down until he got to base, about seven or eight minutes away.

Denying that the vehicle had been used on August 10, Mr Elkins said that a vehicle booked out on a private hire job carrying school children to Gulliver's Kingdom that day became faulty and the job was sub contracted to Swan Street Coaches.

The driver was swapped with a Mr Elliott, who also carried out seat upholstery work, so that he could work on the seats of the vehicle it was alleged was in use on August 10.

After Mr Elkins had produced the waybills of the two drivers concerned, Mr Pugh pointed out that there was no indication on the waybills of the registration numbers of the vehicles being used.

Assuring the commissioner that the vehicle had never left the yard, Mr Elkins said that, when it was tested, the odometer reading was 308,305 kilometres.

The opening reading on a tachograph chart made out when the vehicle was next used, after being inspected by vehicle examiners on the August 27, showed 308,357 kilometres.

It was 29 kilometres from the test station to the Kingfisher yard and the distance to and from Alcester, where the vehicle was inspected on August 27 was 23 kilometres.

The Gulliver's Kingdom trip had left the picking-up point at 9.30 am that morning.

Confirming that he had worked on the seating that morning, Norman Elliott said that Mr Hankin's evidence was "total rubbish." He was taken off the seating job at 1.30 pm, but the vehicle could not have been used as he had left a seat in the aisle and it would have been dangerous to use it.

Confirming that he had worked on the seating that morning, Norman Elliott said that Mr Hankin's evidence was "total rubbish." "They're trying to crucify the man," Mr Elliott said

"They're trying to crucify the man," said Mr Elliott.

After a short adjournment, Mr Elkins produced his working diary and letters from M Y Travel, confirming they had done a trip to Moreton Stanley Park that day, and from Swan Street Coaches, confirming they had done the Gulliver's Kingdom trip.

Asked why M Y Travel had only charged £15, Mr Elkins said that the trip was only about four miles. The party was due at Moreton Stanley Park at 2 pm.

It was not near Astwood Bank and there would have been no need to use the road it was alleged the blue and white coach had been seen on.

Mr Pugh said he found it strange that there was no reference to the registration numbers of the vehicles that undertook the jobs noted in the diary.

Asked about a note of a 53 seater for a swimming baths trip at 12.30 pm on August 10, Mr Elkins said that had been carried out by Swan Street Coaches.

When it was pointed out that it was not on Swan Street's invoice, and that the only item charged on August 10 was £155 for Gulliver's Kingdom, he said that they must have missed it off.

Mr Pugh said that Swan Street had been contacted by his staff. They had said that they had only undertaken the Gulliver's Kingdom job. They were originally going to have done two, but Mr Elkins cancelled the baths trip.

Mr Elkins said in that case the baths job must have been cancelled. They must not have been able to cover it.

Mr Pugh said the proceedings would have to be adjourned to give Mr Elkins an opportunity of investigating the further allegations by Midland Red.

He had to weigh up in his mind whether Mr Elkins could be believed about unauthorised vehicles not being used. In addition, on the last occasion Mr Elkins had clearly been told that any further prohibition notices would lead to the revocation of the licence.

Conceding that further prohibition notices had been issued since the last hearing, Mr Carless said the four vehicles concerned had all passed MoT tests a fortnight prior to the imposition of the prohibitions.

One vehicle had been in use since its test, a second had been in use for 1½ days and the other two had not been used at all.

An immediate prohibition imposed on one of the latter seemed to demonstrate human fallibility on the part of the examiners, in that raised stair edges and an insecure front edge appeared not to have been spotted when the vehicle was tested at Kidderminster.

As far as the three delayed

YOUR WEEKLY REPORT ON LAW AND THE COACH AND BUS OPERATOR BY MICHAEL JEWELL

Immediate revocation for Blueline International

THE eight-vehicle licence held by Southampton-based Blueline International (no connection with Solent Blue Line) has been revoked with immediate effect by Western traffic commissioner Air Vice Marshal Ronald Ashford. The company had been called to a Southampton disciplinary inquiry. Evidence was given by a DoT vehicle examiner that in May he had carried out a fleet check, issuing one delayed and three immediate prohibition notices to the company's vehicles. An examination of the inspection records showed that the declared period between inspections was not being adhered to.

Revoking the licence, Air Vice Marshal Ashford said the statement of intention that the company would keep its vehicles in a fit and serviceable condition had been broken. He refused to stay his decision, pending an appeal to the Transport Tribunal, on grounds of public safety.

prohibition notices were concerned, Mr Carless argued that different examiners took differing views about degrees of wear.

He said there was a simple explanation for Mr Elkins failure to notify the commissioner of convictions for two defective tyres, in that he had not realised the conditions of his licence stipulated that the commissioner had to be notified of any convictions.

Mr Elkins maintained that the vehicle given the immediate prohibition had not been used since it had been tested but Mr Pugh said he found it remarkable the fourth stair edge was raised and insecure if it had not been used.

Mr Elkins said that it just needed two turns of a screwdriver to screw it back down. A vehicle given a delayed prohibition had also not been used and it had been in the same condition that it had come back from the test station in. No prohibitions had been imposed on the four vehicles he had been using on the road.

Mr Elliot said the step on the vehicle given the immediate prohibition had been moving a bit for a few weeks before it went in for test and it could have been missed. He had not thought it was dangerous so he did not sign it off.

West Midland traffic commissioner John Mervyn Pugh said the proceedings would have to be adjourned to give Mr Elkins an opportunity of investigating the further allegations by Midland Red

Mr Pugh said he was particularly concerned about the maintenance in this case. Thirteen days after being tested a vehicle was found to have two dangerous defects. It just did not tie up.

Mr Carless said that, either Mr Elkins had used the vehicle or it was not inspected carefully enough at the test station but Mr Pugh said he would have to arrange for the vehicle examiner to be called to give evidence.

Asking that the licence not be suspended during the adjournment period, Mr Carless said that quite a lot of revenue had already been lost and some of those who had given evidence had gained the benefit of that.

Adjourning the proceedings for 10 days, Mr Pugh said the one factor that dominated everything he did was public safety.

The step edge and the insecure front edge could have caused serious injury to a passenger.

The only conclusion he could come to was he must suspend the licence and Mr Elkins' registered services until the further evidence was heard.

Norris bid dropped

CHATHAM-BASED Norris Coaches dropped its bid to increase the vehicle authorisation on its licence, after financial evidence was heard in private at the company's request, during an Eastbourne public inquiry. The company, said to have been hit by the collapse of a travel firm, had applied to the South Eastern and Metropolitan traffic commissioner Brigadier Michael Turner to increase the authorisation from two to six vehicles.

Brigadier Turner said he was quite satisfied with the company's financial position to run its present two-coach operation.

It could make a revised application to increase its fleet at a later date when the necessary financial statements to support such an application were available.

Sun shines on Sunline

SUNLINE Coaches, of Cardiff, has had its licence renewed for the full five years, with authority to operate five single deckers and one double decker.

The firm's licence had previously been curtailed to three vehicles, but South Wales deputy traffic commissioner Alan Cattell said DoT vehicle examiners now had no reservations about the maintenance of Sunline's vehicles. The firm was seeking continuation of its licence at a Cardiff public inquiry.

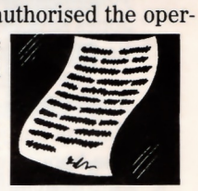
Elizabeth Rees, a partner, said that, since the previous problems, she had watched the maintenance of the vehicles with "an eagle eye. Our garage was as concerned as we were about what happened."

West Cross renewal

DAVID Cole, who trades as West Cross Coaches, of Swansea, has had his licence renewed for a 12-month period by South Wales deputy traffic commissioner Alan Cattell.

In June South Wales commissioner John Mervyn Pugh took no action against Mr Coles' licence after being told that a coach carrying school children was involved in a crash just 24 hours after it had been bought from Glanford Morgan, who traded as Atlas Coaches, of Gorseinon, near Swansea, whose licence had been revoked on maintenance grounds.

Mr Cattell said that two vehicles had failed their annual tests and the Vehicle Inspectorate had recommended that Mr Cole's licence, which authorised the operation of one minibus and two single deckers, be renewed for one year only.



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Seventy years up to date

Billed as "the most modern 1920s styled omnibus ever", the Fleur De Lys Lincoln has surprises in store. Mike Morgan puts it to the test

A vehicle which stands out from the crowd

IF you have an eye for something different then this is the vehicle for you. Generate a concept in your mind of a small PSV to meet a particular need and Fleur De Lys of Newark will be pleased to hear from you.

The base vehicle in question is the hand-built Lincoln. Fleur De Lys builds its own chassis, installs a Ford Transit engine and gearbox, couples up a Renault rear axle and creates a rolling chassis with a five-tonne GVW. Independent suspension and disc brakes at the front promise ride sophistication and power steering could be included as an added refinement.

Fleur De Lys first made its mark in the automobile industry with replica delivery vans - the first going out 10 years ago. From that it developed a magnificent Landaulet fit for high-society weddings. Now it has moved into the coach and bus world with a vehicle specifically designed to fill niches in the PSV market. Paint finish on the chassis is the first promise of a quality product.

Remember that the Lincoln is designed from the ground up. There are no compromises forced by a proprietary chassis.

When it comes to the body - well this is something completely different.

It gives you, the buyer, the inspiration to create a distinctive vehicle that promotes your business. Production director Trevor Jones says he hasn't yet quoted for two identical Lincolns.

The prototype shows the potential. It is fitted with high-back seats in a soft trim interior, yet has jack-knife folding doors and bus-like hopper windows. All can be changed to suit individual requirements. Although the general theme is that of a 1920s bus with clerestory roof, there is no deliberate attempt to copy a specific original.

In Mr Jones' words "this is a concept vehicle." If a local service bus of distinctive style is wanted, then the Lincoln can readily oblige. On the other hand it can be an hotel courtesy coach, corporate chariot or executive mini-coach. The concept assumes that the buyer needs a vehicle which stands out from the crowd yet has no vices that disadvantage it when compared with the conventional fare.

Practicality and long-life are part of the design brief. The body frame is made of welded stainless steel and the side panels are bonded for ease of repair. Contrary to popular perceptions that bonded panels result in lengthy repair times, Mr Jones says that the process is much easier.

Vulnerable corner panels are in glass fibre as is the one-piece moulding which incorporates the bulkhead and radiator shell. Separate front wings are fitted.

For operators who want to focus on the nostalgia market the vehicle can be fitted with appropriate period fittings, including a detachable stainless steel or brass dummy radiator.

SPECIFICATION

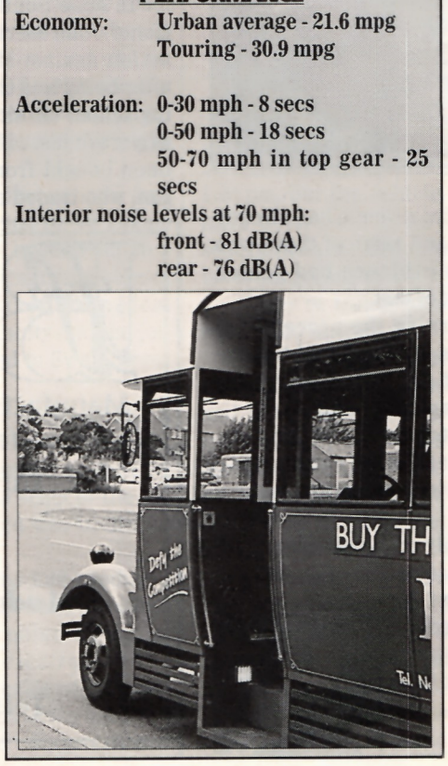
Vehicle:	**Fleur De Lys Lincoln 700 - 21 seats**
Price:	**£39,995**
Engine:	**Ford 2.5-litre diesel - 100PS @ 4,000 rpm**
Gearbox:	**Ford five speed**
Suspension:	**Front - independent**
	Rear - multileaf springs
Brakes:	**Front - discs**
	Rear - drums
Rear axle:	**Renault - 5.857:1 ratio**

DIMENSIONS

Length:	**7 metres**
Width:	**2.33 metres**
Wheelbase:	**4.2 metres**
Unladen Weight:	**2,945 kg**
GVW:	**5,500 kg**

PERFORMANCE

Economy:	**Urban average - 21.6 mpg**
	Touring - 30.9 mpg
Acceleration:	**0-30 mph - 8 secs**
	0-50 mph - 18 secs
	50-70 mph in top gear - 25 secs
Interior noise levels at 70 mph:	
	front - 81 dB(A)
	rear - 76 dB(A)



The Lincoln's Tardis-like illusion is achieved by ingenious choice of window size, inward curved body sides and the roof shape.

Each seat is aligned to a window pillar. This gives two very worthwhile benefits. Passengers have an uninterrupted view and seatbelt mounting points are in the right place. Here lies some important by-products from fresh thinking without the constraints of building a replica. There is no denying the vintage appeal, but equally there are no concessions when it comes to passenger comfort and driveability.

Considerable development work has gone into the the chassis with the whole vehicle being subjected to merciless testing at MIRA. The benefits are dependable road-holding and refined ride comfort.

Inevitably an unladen test suggested a fairly lively ride on the back seat - although this aspect of the vehicle should become acceptable when loaded with passengers.

Fleur De Lys has been so successful in masking engine noise that the driver has a very quiet life. Body boom is negligible and wind noise surprisingly well suppressed - given the apparent lack of streamlining. However, move further down the vehicle and you very quickly pick up a high-pitched whine from the gearbox and, further back, there is an added contribution from the rear axle.

Performance from the Ford 2.5-litre direct injection diesel engine with electronically controlled throttle linkage is very rapid. Response through the pedal is so smooth that there is no hint of turbo-lag or the sort of delay commonly associated with diesel power.

The Lincoln is an excellent vehicle to drive. Forward vision is very good - even in the rain thanks to dual windscreen wipers - and the mirrors ideal. From the passenger's angle it offers a quality ride in a vehicle of impressive style and for the operator it offers considerable potential as the bus or coach that customers can identify as worthy of special attention.

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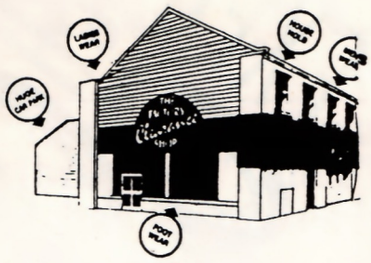

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Alton Towers all set for firework shows

ALTON Towers' fireworks spectaculars are all set for October 31, November 1... and November 5.

The extra show has been added - on the big day - due to demand for last year's events, which attracted 50,000 people. This year, evening-only tickets will not be available but there will be discounts of between £2 and £3 a head, and a free prize draw for operators who pay before October 18.

Standard rates apply to all-day tickets, the fireworks spectaculars becoming a free add-on to the unusual 125 rides and other attractions at Alton Towers. A group rate full day is £8.99 for adults (£7.50 for under 14s) or £8.25 (£7) if pre-paid.

Full details are from Alton Towers on 0538 702200.

Alton fireworks: rocketing to popularity

Historic town's council trying to get improved coach parking

EVESHAM Town Council is pushing local authorities for improved coach parking in the historic town.

Town clerk Peter J. Gordon is one of the local dignitaries who fees that, if the situation doesn't improve, coaches will simply drive on to Stratford and valuable tourism revenue will be lost.

"We are pressing hard for some form of improved coach parking," he told *Coach Tours & Excursions*. "The riverside coach park, which has previously been unsurfaced, will be improved and there is better signposting for the town coach park at Old Brewery.

"Operators can also drop passengers in the High Street at existing bus stops before parking up. We want operators to know that coaches are very welcome in Evesham, and we will do what we can to help operators."

Details of Evesham's coach parking and the local attractions can be obtained from the Tourist Information Centre on 0386 446944.

Sally shopper trips - prices

SALLY Line has pointed out that prices for Christmas shopping trip sailings differ slightly from those quoted in Coach Tours & Excursions, September 26 issue.

The published price is £14.50 per person, based on a minimum 30, with coach driver and courier free. The total £435 is subject to a 10 per cent trade discount, giving a net £13.05 per person, £391.50 for the coachload. Additional passengers over the 30 are £13.05 each, net.

The shoppers' special which uses a 4 pm departure and return at 11.59 pm is priced at £16 net. Our apologies if any confusion has occurred.

Menus reflect British cuisine

NEW menus at Covent Garden restaurant Porters are reflecting its uniquely British cuisine. Owned by the Earl of Bradford, Porters has fought the suggestion that English food is boring with memorable lunches, such as beef with herb dumplings or roast loin of pork with crackling, followed by spotted dick and custard. Porters sales manager Sorrel Morganti suggests the restaurant may be ideal as an add-on for theatre trips, serving food until 11.30 pm.

The new menus - each two or three courses - start at £10.40 a head rising to £17 for a real feast and hot toddy.

Details from Sorrel Morganti on 081 871 2666, Fax 081 871 2665.

Chain opens Dutch hotel

A NEW Campanile Hotel Gril has opened in Holland at Leeuwarden - on the north coast near the German border.

It is the seventh hotel in the French-owned chain to open in the Netherlands, offering bed and breakfast for £21 a night at group rate, or half board for £32.

Meals can be prebooked at around £11 a head. The area around the hotel has potential as a tourism venue, with a range of watersports, 70 museums and the nearby Frisian islands.

For full details, contact Cocky or Henk Holscher, on 010 31 58 880605, or Campanile Central Reservations on 010 33 1 64 624662, Fax 010 33 1 64 624661.

Murder and mystery

OAK Hotels is offering luxury murder mystery weekends for £75 a head half board for two nights.

The group packages based at Wigan include a full 'performance' by actors from Wigan Pier which use the industrial attraction to provide an authentic backdrop. Gas-lit backrooms and the Victorian buildings at Wigan Pier are the stage for the gruesome murder, while guests get exclusive use of the complex and a free trip along the Leeds Liverpool Canal.

Clients will be based at the three-star Oak Hotel near Wigan Pier. The deal includes two breakfasts and two dinners, a lunch and a welcome cocktail.

Full details from David Gow-Smith or Lisa Sherwin on 0273 220033, Fax 0273 778000.

BCC brief on M-way services

THE Bus & Coach Council has compiled a useful briefing sheet detailing motorway services. The facilities for passengers and drivers are detailed, together with contact numbers and a rough map showing the location of the services. Copies are available to BCC members from Sardinia House, London WC2A 3LZ.

Off-season guide to historic properties

THE British Tourist Authority has produced an off-season guide to historic properties aimed at the coach operator.

The travel trade manual highlights more than 500 properties which - as under-cover attractions - provide an ideal add-on or excursion venue when bad weather threatens.

Most relevant details are provided, including opening hours, contact names and catering available for groups, which is often unavailable to individuals. A section gives news of special events coming up this winter, which will help coach operators market trips.

Copies of Historic Houses, Castles and Monuments '92/'93 are available free from the Product Marketing Department, British Tourist Authority, Thames Tower, Black's Roa, London W6 9EL.

Doggone it, it's a sellout for Sunday

SUNDERLAND'S first Sunday greyhound race meeting is being staged tomorrow (October 11) at the Regal Sunderland Stadium.

Tickets were selling fast for the event a week before it, all the suites having been let and prebookings for the restaurant filling it to capacity. The stadium says the reason is that the gala event has been deliberately designed to shake off the old image of sheepskin coats and cigars, and attract families with a £3 ticket price with free admission for under 14s.

The day begins with local school bands and sheepdog agility demonstrations, includes a parachuting display, magicians, bouncy castle and Punch and Judy and finishes with a Karaoke session in the restaurant.

The Regal Sunderland Stadium is thinking of running more dog-racing Sundays, and has asked coach operators to register an interest with them, without obligation, on 091 536 7250. Ask for Linda Murray.

Museum offering discounts package

IRONBRIDGE Gorge Museum is offering a package of discounts and bonuses to operators using the range of Shropshire attractions, in an effort to combat bad practice.

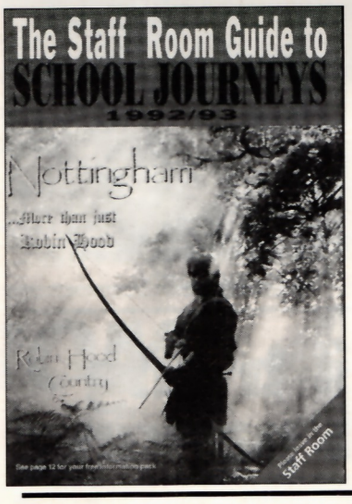
"This year has been a difficult one for all of us and we want operators to help us provide a better service," said a spokesman for the museum. "It is true to say that some coach companies never contact us prior to their visit, quite often dump groups in Ironbridge town and do not transport them between sites.

"It is impossible for visitors to walk the distances between the various museums. Coaches need to transport their groups."

The museum has implored operators to keep them in touch with problems: "Whether your moans are driving hours or ticketing requirements, don't go away dissatisfied with your experience without telling us why."

The benefits available for prebooked groups include individual passports for coach party members rather than the impersonal group ticket, an extra 10 per cent discount, commission on sales of Coalport China by prior arrangement, and meal vouchers for the driver.

Details from Margaret Wheeldon on 0952 433522, mentioning this article.



Guide is oldest and most comprehensive

THE Staff Room Guide to School Journeys is the longest-established and most comprehensive handbook to excursion venues, giving almost 250 pages of information about castles, activity holidays, museums, galleries, parks, accommodation and a great deal more.

While this guide is similar to that distributed to coach operators through Coach and Bus Week subscribers, it has been carefully designed to appeal to the education market. Operators could either recommend it to schools or even send copies to schools which have provided business in the past.

Copies of the guide can be obtained for £15 from: Staff Room Guide sales, Subscriptions Department, Emap Response, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS.

Five restaurants make lunch in London easier

LUNCH in London this winter is being made easier by five restaurants at Hay's Galleria, adjacent to Tooley Street Coach Park.

The newly-developed complex is within spitting distance of Tower Bridge, HMS Belfast and London Dungeon, making it the ideal place for a break.

Meals available start with sandwiches but can be as elaborate as French cuisine, depending on budget. The Horniman is a pub offering a Pantry Lunch at £4.15 a head or a three-course carvery roast for £10.50.

Morning coffee and afternoon tea can also be laid on and private rooms and entertainment are available. It is open seven days a week.

Balls Brothers Wine Bar can provide a simple £3 meal in the bar or three-course restaurant lunches from £15 to £20, all traditional English cuisine. Special wine tastings from a cellar of 90 varieties can be arranged.

Sweeney Todd's Cafe Restaurant, in the Cotton Centre next door to Hay's, has American-style cuisine, with meals from £3.95 a head to £9.15 for a steak. Children's parties are a speciality.

La Truffe Noire is an elegant French restaurant in Tooley Street, with meals from £13 for two courses and coffee to £21 for three courses. Timing of pre-booked meals is flexible but the maximum group size is 25.

Finally, the Café Rouge is a French brasserie seating 240 which can provide three courses for just £7.95 or cheaper. A simple pizza menu is also available.

Once the meal is over, there are plenty of market stalls and shops for clients to enjoy for an hour or so.

Horniman - Nigel Hastings, 071 407 3611, Fax 071 357 6449;

Balls Brothers - Nigel Dean, 071 407 4301;

Sweeney Todd's - 071 407 5267, Fax 071 378 1418;

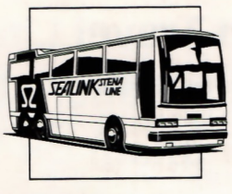
La Truffe Noire - M Alan-Ahmed, 071 378 0621, Fax 071 403 0689;

Café Rouge - Jason Danziger, 071 378 0097. Hay's Galleria manager Brien Hobbs can be contacted on 071 403 5939. Please mention Coach and Bus Week when making inquiries.

SEALINK STENA LINE

STRANRAER/LARNE

The Final Piece of the Picture



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Feel free: join The Prisoner

CHANNEL Four's re-screening of the cult series *The Prisoner* could be the ideal cue for operators to produce short breaks at the Welsh holiday village where the series was filmed.

The plug was pulled on The Prisoner 25 years ago, after 17 episodes, but the series has never disappeared. It has its own worldwide fan club with 2,500 members and a loyal following - particularly among 'children of the sixties'.

The idea of a government agent imprisoned by the elusive Number One - whose identity was never revealed - and being run by a young Leo 'Rumpole' McKern required an unusual location for filming. It was discovered in North Wales.

Portmeirion, a stone's throw from Porthmadog in Gwynedd, was the distinctive, Italian-style setting from which Patrick McGoohan tried to escape every week. Built by Sir William Clough Ellis and privately owned, it has since become a top-class holiday centre run by Sir William's grandson Robin Llewellyn.

The centre now comprises a luxury hotel with 14 rooms and 17 cottages which share the hotel restaurant. There is a *Prisoner* souvenir shop on site.

The four-crown rated facility has set groups rates at a pricey but heavily discounted £71 a night half board. This compares to a rack rate for individuals of up to £98 for room only, so while the price is high, the apparent value of a group visit should help it sell to *Prisoner* fans.

Aside from the natural beauty of the area, situated in Cardigan Bay in the mouth of the Vale of Ffestiniog, there's a great deal more on offer for tourists. The Ffestiniog Railway running up to Blaenau Ffestiniog from Porthmadog is perhaps the best-known, and likely to appeal to nostalgic *Prisoner* groups.

There's also the West Highland Railway, Railway Museum and Maritime Museum at Porthmadog. Linked to these are a number of industrial heritage attractions, such as mines.

Pottery is another big attraction. Porthmadog Pottery's Snowdon Mill is a workshop where visitors can see potters in action. Unfortunately, and like many North Wales attractions, it is now closed but re-opens at Easter.

Patrick McGoohan in Portmeirion as The Prisoner

Details of the Portmeirion Hotel are available by phoning reservations on 0766 770228. It closes for three weeks in January but says availability this winter is generally good.

Pleas to Kent operators to take advantage of training initiatives

KENT coach operators are being asked to get together and take advantage of a new driver/courier training initiative.

Kent Tourism Manpower has been formed to help package training and arrange subsidy for companies who have training problems. But project manager Paul Street says it's up to operators to help them to help themselves. "These are changing times, and we know that drivers in particular are now being asked to perform two roles - that of driver and courier. Our role is to provide guidance but, to make the best of what we can do, we need groups of operators who have already identified the problems," said Mr Street.

He said he was only too aware of the need to keep drivers working while they trained: "We can arrange courses and training that don't take employees away from the wheel for days on end. Coach operators are typical of the tourism industry in general - we've all got the same problem... we simply cannot put work aside."

Mr Street's role is to liaise between training professionals such as colleges; groups of companies; and funding sources such as the Training Enterprise Council.

"What we do not want is operators who say 'It's free training, I'll take fifty.' If we are to look for funding, we have to look for commitment first. Once operators have, as it were, clubbed together to give us the problems and firm contracts for funding, we can use our skill and connections to provide the solution," Mr Street said.

Mr Street said such areas as general customer care, Kent guide training and care for mobility impaired people might be arranged as long as it could be demonstrated that the county would benefit.

Details of Kent Tourism Manpower can be obtained from Paul Street on 0634 844411.

Low-price hotel nights for World Travel Market visitors

LOW-PRICE London hotels nights are on offer to operators going to the World Travel Market on November 17 to 20. London Hotels and Theatre Service says its allocation of rooms this winter includes accommodation in the Earl's Court Park, opposite the show. Rates here start at around £65.

Contact Tony Hess on 071 938 5344,

Fireworks at Thorpe

THORPE Park has organised two huge firework displays for Halloween and November 1.

The 'Skyshows' have swallowed up £6,000 in firework bills and will keep street entertainers busy throughout the evening. The day begins as normal with admission to the rides until 5 pm. Entry to the firework show will begin at 4 pm, when the crowds will be entertained or can grab a snack at the on-site Burger King.

The fireworks start at 6 pm, with an hour to enjoy the show before the park closes at 7pm.

Prices at group rate - pre-paid tickets for admission are cheaper - will be £7.50 adults, £5.50 children under 14. Late admission to the firework display on its own is £3 with no group discount.

Details are from Derek Oliver at Thorpe Park, on 0932 569393.

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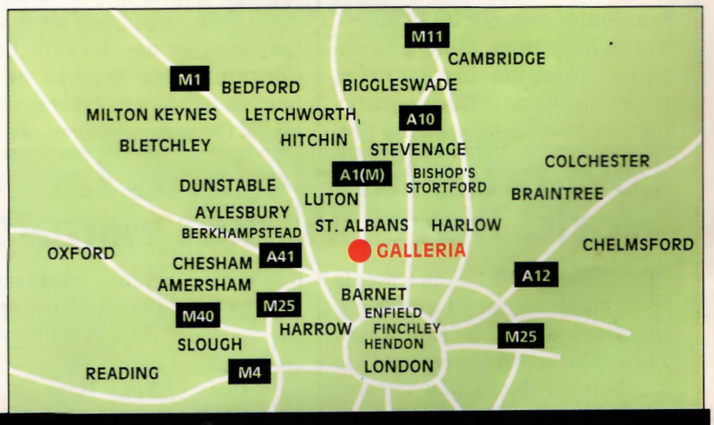

ON THE A1(M) AT HATFIELD ONLY 5 MINUTES NORTH OF THE M25

Inviting prospect for operators and clients

COACH tour specialist the Hotel Norwich is pitching for a coachload every night of next year with familiarisation visits for group organisers.

It has invited coach operators to bring up to ten group clients to see the 108 rooms for themselves and sample hospitality which it is proud to say is the same for groups as any other guests.

Hotel manager Peter Rudd says the coach market already provides £350,000 in revenue annually but the figure could be higher: "We see this hosting arrangement as a long-term commitment to work with the trade and help increase demand for Norfolk," he said.

The deal on offer is two nights' bed and breakfast, a dinner and a welcome cocktail plus a full educational itinerary. All guests must be carefully selected for the business they can provide for the hotel, with the ultimate aim of launching special interest breaks in the historic Norfolk city.

A huge variety of sports and pastimes is possible, says Mr Rudd. Among those in a list of 50 the hotel has compiled are antiques, birdwatching, country sports, cricket, angling, fitness, real ale drinking, soccer, steam railways, the Broads, walking and photography. Unusual interests in the area include studying the Norfolk dialect, Norfolk cooking and brass rubbing.

The Hotel Norfolk - part of the Property Partnership Ltd based at the Noverre Theatre - charges group rates from £25 to £30 half board.

Details of the familiarisation trips from Peter Rudd, on 0603 787260. Mention this article when inquiring.

Festival proves a success

THE last Garden Festival has been declared a success despite a recession-hit excursion market.

Two million visitors arrived at Ebbw Vale during the 157 days, enjoying the benefits of £14 million sponsorship and generating £18 million in revenue. There were 160,000 school children at the event despite a target of just 100,000, and efforts to dovetail the festival into the National Curriculum are said to have brought the numbers up.

Senior citizens comprised 300,000 out of the total.

Clients fit at Swallow

COACH holidaymakers are getting fitter... thanks to Swallow Hotels' 28 leisure clubs.

Latest statistics from the 34-hotel group have revealed that, despite their average age, coach travel clients are enjoying the pools and saunas. A fifth of the total users arrived at a Swallow Hotel on a coach tour.

Business users and overseas visitors have generated the best growth in use of the leisure clubs, which Swallow says have been designed for relaxation as much as iron-pumping.

BITOA sees the White Cliffs Experience

Dover's eye-opener

MEMBERS of the British Incoming Tour Operators Association saw England's Visitor Attraction of the Year first-hand when they dropped in at the White Cliffs Experience at Dover.

Many of the 23 BITOA members admitted that, despite the attraction being close to a major port, they had not paid it a visit in the two years it had been open: "It was a real eye-opener, and it is not surprising that it has won so many awards in such a short time," said group leader Michael Dunkley of Sovereign Tourism.

Santa gets steamed up

DIDCOT Railway Centre's popular Sunday Santa Steamings will be on offer to coach operators from November 29 to December 20.

The fun events are designed to appeal not only to failed engine drivers and railway buffs but to families. Santa will be housed in a Great Western steam train grotto from 11 am to 4 pm, handing out gifts.

While this is going on, dads can relish the locos, the gift shop speciality stocked for Christmas, or have a snack in the Refreshment Room.

Cost of all this is £4.50 a head or £3.20 for the over 60s, including the present or mince pie and drinks for the grown ups. Groups must prebook.

Contact Didcot Railway Centre on 0235 817200 for details.

Check out Devon... in London

COACH operators looking for new tours into Devon need look no further than London - and the Destination Devon II exhibition on November 3.

The show is offering a prize draw as incentive for operators to get to the Cumberland Hotel, Marble Arch, but almost 40 products including hotels, attractions and tourism offices should ensure a good attendance.

Two seminars are also arranged for the exhibition. 'Negotiating with venues' from 10.30 am onwards may help operators find the best bargains, while the afternoon session, 'Nice conference, shame about the speakers,' could appeal to conference organisers.. Cost of both seminars is £49 plus VAT.

Details of Destination Devon II and booking forms are available from Sue Langabeer on 0392 382166.

Catalyst wins NWTB attraction of the year award

THE North West Tourist Board's attraction of the year is Catalyst, the Widnes-based exhibition and museum of the chemical industry.

Director of Catalyst, Dr Gordon Rintoul (below) received the award from chairman of the NWTB, Anthony Goldstone. The exhibition has this year attracted 50,000 visitors, many from the education market, and expects its Phase Three development being planned at the moment to boost that figure.

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£4,200
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BEDFORD

1981 YNT DOMINANT III, tinted windows, Bristol Dome, 53 seats, exterior white and blue, very good condition, MoT June '93, any inspection. Price **£7,950 + VAT ono. Tel. (0932) 785153.** (28286/BE)

1981, W reg, YMT Dominant II, 53, very clean and tidy for year, p/door etc, MoT February 1993, **£8,250 + VAT**, well worth viewing. **Tel. Northampton 0604 763388.** (28495/BE)

BEDFORD

1978 51 SEATER BEDFORD
Reconditioned engine, very clean, unwritten and tested, new battery fitted.
£4,200 + VAT
Tel: (0462) 814477
(28373/BE)

1977 (R reg) YMT PLAXTON SUPREME, 53 seats, MoT November. **£3,000 + VAT. 1979** YMT PLAXTON SUPREME MkIV, 53 seats, recently refurbished, MoT October. **£6,500 + VAT or p/x for heavyweight. Tel. 0623 753644.** (00022/BE)

1980 YMT DUPLE, 53 retrimmed seats, good condition. We have owned this vehicle since 1981. FSH, Telma. **New MoT** expires September 1993. **£4,950 + VAT. Tel. 071-739 5454.** (28265/BE)

1980 BEDFORD YMT PLAXTON SUPREME, 53 seats, express doors, very reliable. **£5,950 ovno + VAT. Tel. 081-888 6062.** (28275/BE)

1977 YMT BEDFORD Plaxton Supreme, 53 very clean seats, P/A, radio cassette, side lockers, MoT 24.3.93. This coach requires a good home. **£4,250 + VAT ono. Tel. 021-422 4501.** (28292/LE)

DENNIS

1990
G DENNIS JAVELIN
Plaxton Paramount 3200
Immaculate, white/blue/orange exterior, 12 metre, air suspension, 53 recliners, curtains, centre carpets, usual extras, new MoT if required.
£59,500 + VAT
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(00005/DE)

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TWO BOVA FUTURAS
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Private plates, high floor, full executive, centre sunken toilets, 49 seats. Both excellent condition bodily and mechanically.
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p/x possible
Tel. (0388) 604419
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DAF

1983 Jonckheere DAF SB2300, Sutrak air conditioning, full executive 49 seats plus courier, private plate, toilet, drinks machine, TV video, Blaupunkt Stereo PA, continental door, double glazed, centre carpet, full draw blinds, Telmar, Webasto, tested June 1993, superb condition, with brand new genuine DAF engine, maintained regardless of cost.

£35,000 + VAT

Tel. Gary Executive Travel (0902) 630069

(28351/DAF/PIC/CH)

DAF 400 Diesel

Ex demo – Crystals high spec 16 seater, including stereo system, luggage racks, saloon heater, easy entrance by wide power door.

£17,950 + VAT

Tel. 0322 228538

(00010/DAF)

DAF MB200 DKTL, 1979, Supreme IV 11.6 turbo engine, ZF splitter gearbox, new tyres, side lockers, PA, radio cassette, 51 retrimmed seats, rear toilet, service records available. **"A go anywhere coach for only £12,995 + VAT." Please ring Warrington (0925) 822298 or 813181.** (00002/DAF)

WANTED: Bova Europas or Calypsos, for immediate purchase. **Cash waiting. Tel. 0484 545241.** (28363/DAF)

1983 DAF MB 200 VAN HOOL, centre toilet, wired for TV and coffee machine, Webasto, very good condition. **Price £32,000 + VAT. Tel. 041-886 4134.** (28359/DAF)

1983 MB 200 DKFL 3500 EXECUTIVE, Telma limiter, tinted windows, driver's bunk, toilet, TV, video, coffee machine, 44 reclining seats, four tables, MoT April 1993. **£28,000. Tel. (0296) 713201. Howletts, Winslow, Bucks.** (28354/DAF)

1983 DAF BERKHOF SBW exec, 49/53 seats, central toilet, Telma, wired for two TV's, video, coffee machine, Webasto, bunk curtains, 12 months MoT, vgc in and out. **£29,500 + VAT ono.** (28383/DAF)

1989 DAF 425 INTEGRAL, ZF 7 speed, huge luggage area, 55 recliners, TV, video, double glazed, courier, PA, 220K only, full service history. **Reasonable offers. Blythswood Motors. Tel. 041-221 3165 or 041-639 6107 evenings.** (28399/DAF)

FLEUR-DE-LYS

FLEUR-DE-LYS

6 seat Vintage Landaulet, only done 4,000 miles since new, excellent Wedding car. Must be seen.

£28,000 + VAT

or exchange for young quality coach, 49 seats, Jonckheere, Van Hool, on Volvo or Mercedes 0303 *Cash difference*

Tel: 0506 858181

(29035/FDL)

LEYLAND

LEYLAND TIGER 245

1985 Duple Laser 2, tested 11 months, taxed 6 months, complete new engine, overhauled, semi-auto box complete, new brakes, drums, etc., new floor recovered, 49-53 Neoplan recliners, demount toilet, new tyre & more.

£26,850 ono + VAT

Part exchange considered

0786 814319/0831 637985

(28504/LE/PIC/CH)

1981 LEYLAND CUB, automatic, 31 seater Duple service bus, MoT April 1993, **£6,000 ono + VAT. Tel. 069 887 207/337.** (28488/LE)

1974 LEYLAND LEOPARD, PP, semi-auto, new test, 51 recliners, white, vgc. **£4,400 + VAT. Tel: 0633 850834.** (28369/LE)

FORD

1976 (P) FORD PLAXTON SUPREME

53 seats, express doors, MoT March '93, ideal contract coach.

£2,350 + VAT

Tel. 061-790 2842

(28362/FO)

FORD SUPREME, R Reg, 53 seats, power door, tested July 1993, full maintenance records. **Open to offers. P&R Coaches, phone Preston (0772) 312577.** (28503/FO)

FORD 1979 Plaxton Supreme, 53 seats, tested, good condition. **£3,950. Tel. (0203) 637171.** (28358/FO)

FORD turbo, Plaxton Paramount 3200, B reg, 8.5 metre, 35 seater, radio & PA, excellent condition. **Tel. 0646 692963.** (28390/FO)

LEYLAND

1979 LEOPARD/PLAXTON SUPREME, 50 seats, semi-automatic, power door, tinted side windows, Telma, MoT Aug '93. Owned and maintained by us since new – full service records available. **Tel. Epsom Coaches (0372) 725252.**

1979 LEYLAND LEOPARD PLAXTON SUPREME, 53 seats, tinted windows, Bristol dome, POD, curtains, semi-auto. **£8,950 ovno + VAT. Tel. 081-888 6062.** (28274/LE)

1972 LEYLAND LEOPARD bus body, PSV tested Nov 1992, 40 seats, large luggage area, good condition. **£1,500 ono. Tel. 0290 20942 (evenings).** (28372/LE)

1987 LEYLAND TIGER DUPLE Exec 320. 50 reclining seats, TV, coffee machine, servery, toilet, **£37,000 + VAT. Tel. (0371) 872644 (Essex).** (28353/LE)

LEYLAND CUB, 1985, 33 seater, long test, low mileage, very good condition. **£5,900 + VAT ono. Tel. 0495 310183.** (00017/LE)

LEYLAND

1977 LEYLAND

12 metre, 53 seats, C.O.F. 1/93, much recent work completed, very clean for year, straight body, PA, curtains, owner/drivers workhorse, used daily, blue/cream.

£5,500 ovno

Tel. 0703 643885

(28499/LE/PIC/CH)

1972 LEYLAND LEOPARD WILLOWBROOK

53 seats, service bus, semi-auto, MoT June '93.

£3,000 + VAT

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(28366/LE/PIC/CH)

1974 LEYLAND LEOPARD

Plaxton, 47 seats, service bus, semi-auto, MoT Nov '93.

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1985 LEYLAND DOYAN S.A. EXEC, 51+, demountable, TV, video, long test, 400k only. **Reasonable offers. Blythswood Motors. Tel. 041-221 3165 or 041-639 6107 evenings.** (28397/LE)

MERCEDES

MERCEDES 609 G REG

(immaculate little executive)

16 Vogel 2000 recliners (full size), 2 tables, fully carpeted, Webasto heating, full radio p/a system, drinks machine, etc, MoT & tax, pure white and unlettered.

£22,000 + VAT

Would part exchange for new 18 or 21 seat Optimo II (no fancy deals please)

MERCEDES 609 F REG

Immaculate 21 seat midi coach, full p/a system, curtains etc, white and unlettered, MoT Aug 93, tax 1 year, first class condition and ready for work.

£16,500 + VAT ovno

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(29036/MER)

MERCEDES 709D, 1988, 25 seats + 6 highbacked seats, Jack-knife door, MoT July 1993, not used since test, ready for work. **Choice of two. Price £12,500 ono. IVECO**, 1989, 21 highbacked seats, Jack-knife door, low mileage, very tidy, MoT Sept '93, not used since test. **Price £10,750 ono. Tel. 061-945 9090.** (28501/ME)

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24 seater, MoT Oct 93

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24 seater, MoT Aug 93

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NEW MERCEDES 711D turbo luxury coach built, 25 seats, arm rests, boot racks, power swivel door, 7 days delivery, **£38,000.** NEW MERCEDES 709D, 29 service seats, 7 standees, coachbuilt, wide entrance door and passage, Eberspacher heating, DipTac, 7 days, **£34,500.** Also 609 24 and 26 with or without power door. MERCEDES 410, 16 seats, immediate delivery. **Tel. Blythswood Motors on 041-221 3165 or 041-639 6107 evenings.** (28396/ME)

NEW 811D extended 33 service seats + 12 standees, 750mm glider door, latest DipTac steps, manual or auto, stock. **Blythswood Motors, Glasgow, tel. 041-221 3165 or 041-639 6107 evenings.** (28395/ME)

MERCEDES 609D

27 moq. seats, high spec, power door, red/gold exterior, first reg. 1988, annual Feb 93, very tidy.

£15,500

0322 228538

(28377/ME/PIC/CH)

MERCEDES OPTARE

33 + 8 seats, power door, blue/white exterior, brown interior, first reg 1988, annual March 1993, very tidy,

£22,500

0322 228538

(28378/ME/PIC/CH)

MIDIBUS

IVECO 49/10, 1986 D, 21 low back moquette seats, 5 standees, electric door, new engine, April 1991, full year's MoT, **£5,995 + VAT ovno. Tel. (0293) 862595 (Gatwick).** (28500/MDB)

TOYOTA OPTIMO CAETANO MARK 1, 1990, 21 seats and crew seat, white interior, radio/PA system, tinted windows, curtains, carpets, as new, plus 2 extra seat covers, full year's test. **£26,500 ono + VAT. Tel. 091-416 2061.** (28384/MDB)

MINICOACH

1989 FREIGHT ROVER 300 Series, high roof, twin axle, new diesel engine just fitted, 16 high back seats, taxed, tested, April 1993, excellent condition throughout, **£8,750 + VAT. Tel. Gary Executive Travel (0902) 630069.** (28352/MC)

VAN HOOL

VAN HOOL Acron, 1983, private plates, Webasto heating, video, 2 TVs, toilet, water boiler, double glazing, new clutch, new MoT, very good condition. **£28,900 + VAT. Tel. 0905 772301 (anytime).** (28360/VAN)

VOLVO

1985 VOLVO B10M JONCKHEERE

51 recliners + courier seat, bunk, toilet, TV/video, hot drinks machine, MoT April 93, excellent all round.

£42,500 ono + VAT

Tel. 051-428 6102

(28376/VO)

1983 B10M Plaxton Paramount 3500, 49 seats (re-upholstered) + courier, vending machine, toilet, Telma, double glazed, pa/radio/tape, MoT Oct '93.

1984 B10M Plaxton Paramount 3500, 50 seats + courier, Telma, double glazed, pa/radio/tape, Mot Mar '93.

The above vehicles have been operated and regularly serviced by us since new – full maintenance records available for inspection.

Telephone Epsom Coaches 0372 725252

(00007/VO)

B10M PLAXTON 3500, 1986, full spec, 51/53 R seats, toilet, video, drinks machine, Telma, double glazing, new MoT.

B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE, 1988, 49/53 usual Alizee spec, plus video, drinks machine, new MoT.

Both above vehicles are in excellent condition, brown/fawn interior, dual blue, cream and orange exterior.

Tel. 0453 832121

(28541/VO)

1984 VOLVO B10M DUPLE CARIBBEAN, 49 reclining seats, curtains, WC, coffee machine, needs tidying. Hence price **£29,000 + VAT. Tel. 0480 62329.** (28382/VO)

1982 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON SUPREME V, 51 recliners **£15,000**

1983 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON 3500, 49 recliners + courier seat, rear sunken toilet, Webasto heating, TV & video, rear continental door **£25,000**

1983 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE, 46 recliners + courier seat, rear servery area, water boiler, sink, fridge, rear floor mounted toilet/washroom, Webasto heating, air conditioning, rear continental door, wired TV & video ..... **Choice of two** **£30,000**

Tel. (0292) 312312

(28279/VO)

VOLVO

1989 (April) VOLVO B10M/Van Hool Alizee, 49 seats, toilet, water boiler, video, double glazing, radio/pa, Sutrak air conditioning, sun blinds, interior grey, exterior blue/silver ..... **£75,000+ VAT**

1987 (March) VOLVO B10M/Plaxton Paramount 3500, demountable toilet, 49/53 seats, video, radio/pa, double glazing, telma retarder, water boiler, sun blinds, interior grey, exterior blue/silver ..... **£55,000 + VAT**

1987 (March) VOLVO B10M/Plaxton Paramount 3500, demountable toilet, 49/53 seats, video, radio/pa, water boiler, sun blinds, interior brown, exterior blue/silver **£55,000 + VAT**

1984 (October) VOLVO B10M/Plaxton Paramount 3500, demountable toilet, 49/53 seats, interior sun blinds, double glazing, brown interior, blue/white exterior .....**£42,000 + VAT**

For further details contact
BERKELEY COACH & TRAVEL LTD, PAULTON AVON
Telephone 0761 413196 (Office Hours) or 0761 415321 (Eves)
(28290/VO)

1988 VOLVO B10M
GL, Telma, ZF, Webasto, Plaxton 3500 4 star low driver, 49/53 reclining seats with tables and glove nets. Demountable toilet, continental door, aircraft lockers, Klix drinks machine/fridge, TV/video/radio, double glazed, sun blinds, full curtains, all rubber floor carpeted gangway, 3 large air extractors, bunk and through pannier lockers, airport lights, MoT till March 1993, superb condition, owned from new.
£62,500 + VAT
Flights Coach Travel Ltd
Birmingham 021 554 5232
TWO SOLD – One Remaining (28370/VO/PIC/CH)

1990
VOLVO B10M
Van Hool,
52 seater,
rear toilet
Tel. 050585 456
(00014/VO)

VOLVO B10M P90
57 recliners, full spec,
incl: fridge, carpets, new engine, excellent condition.
May part exchange for 53 or 57 Standard Volvo Viewmaster.
£35,000 ono + VAT
Tel. 0978 720171
(28386/VO)

1986
VOLVO VAN HOOL
B10M Super high 49-53 seats, recliners, toilet, driver's bunk, TV, video, coffee machine, good condition, MoT March 1993, private plate.
£58,000
Tel. Scarlet Band Coaches
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88 TRANSIT, 12 diesel LWB front entrance.

88 VOLVO Duple 340, 49 recliners, toilet, TV.

87 (D) FREIGHT ROVER, Deansgate, 16 dsl.
87 TRANSIT Petrol, 12, PSV, SWB.
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86 IVECO, 19 + 7 standees, service buses, manual box, tested.

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86 RENAULT DODGE, 20 + standees, large entry door, Telma, auto, power steering, tested.

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79 V VOLVO Duple II, 48 rec, toilet, tested.
79 FORD TURBO Duple II, 35 seats, testing.
79 V VOLVO UNICAR, 53 seat, tested.
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1988 E FORD TRANSIT, coach built, 16 seats, 2.5 DI power door, MoT June 93.

1987 (D) MERCEDES 307D, Devon conversions, 12 seats, tinted windows, white exterior, MoT Sept 93.

1986 (D) IVECO 79/14 Caetano, 24 moquette bus seats, power door, white exterior, MoT Sept 93.

1986 (D) FORD TRANSIT, 14 seats, petrol, s/door, white exterior, MoT Sept 93.

1988 (E) VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 49 seat coach, toilet, continental door, TV, video, radio PA, MoT April 93.

1988 E DENNIS JAVELIN DUPLE 320. 53 seats, toilet, wired for TV, video, MoT Feb 93.

1985 B VOLVO B10M, Plaxton Paramount 3500, 50 seats, rear toilet, HP ZF auto gearbox, white exterior, MoT Sept 93.

1985 (B) LEYLAND TIGER CUB, Duple Dominant bus body, Allison automatic gearbox, 27 coach seats, 8 standees, MoT June 1993.

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VOLVO

1988 E Volvo B10M Van Hool Alizee H, fully automatic gearbox, 49/53 reclining seats, courier seat, centre sunken toilet, continental door, Webasto heating, double glazing, Blaupunkt radio PA cassette. **£69,500**

1988 E Volvo B10M Plaxton Paramount 3500, 49 reclining seats, courier seat, rear toilet, Eberspacher heating, fridge, TV, video, new test. **£68,500**

1988 E Volvo B10M Plaxton Paramount 3200. 57 seats, pannier lockers, tinted glass, Telma Retarder, radio PA cassette. Choice of four, new test **£62,500**

1986 PP Volvo B10M GLT, Jonckheere Jubilee 599, 49 reclining seats, courier seat, rear sunken toilet, double glazing, Webasto fin rad, fridge, bunk, carpet, boiler, splitter gearbox, Telma, alloy wheels, Tempo 100, TV, video, air conditioning, new test. **£53,000**

1985 Volvo B10M Plaxton Paramount 3500 11 metre, 48 reclining seats, courier seat, double glazing, Sutrak air conditioning, Webasto, curtains. **£39,500**

1983 B10M Van Hool Alizee, 50 reclining seats, courier seat, floor mounted rear toilet, continental door, fridge, bunk, radio PA, TV, new test. **£35,000**

1982 Volvo B10M Duple Caribbean, 47 reclining seats, rear sunken toilet, double glazing, TV, radio PA cassette, driver's bunk, coffee machine. **£25,000**

1982 Volvo B10M Plaxton Supreme 12M, 53 'E' Type seats retrimmed, tinted glass, curtains. **£23,500**

DAF

1982 DAF MB200 DKTL Jonckheere Bermuda, 49 reclining retrimmed seats, courier seat, rear sunken toilet and continental door, drinks, fridge and bunk, TV, video **£23,500**

1981 DAF MB200 DKTL Jonckheere Bermuda, 49 reclining seats, courier seat, drinks, bunk, radio PA, TV. **£19,000**

LAG

1987 E LAG Panoramic Integral 49 reclining seats, courier seat, centre sunken toilet, double glazing, Webasto, Telma, new test. **£52,500**

LEYLAND

1985 C Tiger 245 Hydracylic g/box, Plaxton Paramount 3500, 53 reclining seats, courier seat, radio PA. **£35,000**

1982 Tiger (260 engine), S/A g/box Duple Goldliner 49 seater, courier seat, rear toilet, double glazing, driver's bunk. **£22,500**

MAN

1990 G MAN 10.180 Caetano Algarve, 35 recliners, tinted glass, curtains, continental door, immaculate **£54,000**

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1987 D Scania K112 10 M East Lancs Fully automatic transmission, 33 seater, three large interior luggage pens. **£27,500**

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1984 VOLVO VAN HOOL, low driver, 49 seats, toilet, TV/video, coffee machine, private plate **£40,000**

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Copyright law is a FACT of life

It's all too easy to sling a video into the player and keep the passengers happy for an hour or so without considering the risks you run.

For some time now, an agency appointed by copyright owners, FACT, has had detectives on the road checking the public performance of feature films and music videos. For although hiring a video from the shop or buying one allows you to watch it in private, public broadcast is definitely not covered.

It is understandable that performers should be touchy about this. How would you feel if you spent £500 on having a new, stunning livery designed only to have someone copy it, colour for colour? Performers rely on royalties for their wages and infringement of copyright is a very serious issue ... you could be jailed for six months for breaking the law.

It is not difficult, however, to stay within the law. Strictly speaking, operators should have paid for and agreed performances of any video through the film distributor and the Performing Rights Society, which licences musical soundtracks. To get around the process, many specialised video hire companies have done this for the operator, and can offer a complete, legal package.

One of the largest public performance video distributors is Filmbank, based in London. The firm has specialised in the coach market for some time, and is heavily used by a number of operators including band bus specialist Wharfedale. Cost of hire is not exorbitant – certainly not as exorbitant as a fine! – and the film list is massive, including some tapes which have yet to reach the video hire shops. Prices are from £240 for six videos over six months, up to ten tapes for £450 for six months – a daily hire rate of 20p to 25p. Contact at Filmbank (071 386 5411) is Mark O'Brien.

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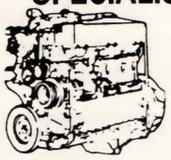

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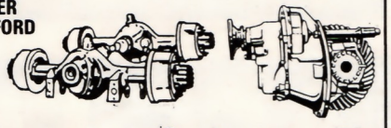

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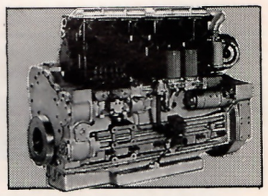

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APPOINTMENTS AND TENDERS

KHCT

FOR SALE BY TENDER

YORK PULLMAN

Tenders are invited for the purchase of the business and assets of York Pullman Coach Company Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of Kingston upon Hull City Transport Limited. The sale is part of KHCT's new business strategy to reorganise and rationalise the KHCT Group, to improve efficiency and profitability.

York Pullman operates:

17 coaches and 6 double deckers on a variety of private hire, excursions and tours as well as local bus and school contract work and rents bases in York, Harrogate and Stamford Bridge.

Forms of tender may be obtained from Nigel Pearson, Deputy Company Secretary, KHCT Ltd., c/o The Guildhall, Hull HU1 2AA (tel: 0482 595030). A charge of £50 is required. (Cheques made payable to Kingston Upon Hull City Transport Limited).

Tenders should be returned by 12 noon on Friday, 20th November 1992.

D.L. Stephenson
Company Secretary

(28380/TEN)

COURSES

P|T|R|C

COURSES FOR AUTUMN 1992

Public Transport Modelling **17 November**

This course provides a complete review of public transport demand modelling including current techniques, aggregate and disaggregate modelling, stated preference and assignment modelling.

The Design of Passenger Information Systems **24 November**

This course highlights good and bad practice in passenger information design, and provides guidance to ensure travel information is presented in a more efficient and effective way.

Full programmes available from Carys Mitchell, PTRC, Glenthorne House, Hammersmith Grove, London W6 0LG

Tel: 081-741 1516 Fax: 081-741 5993

(00020/CO)

APPOINTMENTS AND TENDERS

Department of Planning & Economic Development

Following the recent re-organisation of the Strategic Planning and Transport Division of the Department based at Trent Bridge House we require applications for these three key positions:

Team Leader (Light Rapid Transport)

£22,032-£23,733 p.a.
Ref: SPT. 02/394

The greater Nottingham Light Rapid Transport Bill is currently being considered by Parliament and the Nottingham project is one of the very few serious contenders for implementation. The post offers a rare opportunity for a suitably qualified applicant to work on this very exciting project at a high level, at the same time gaining the benefit of managing a team covering a variety of disciplines. The principal emphasis of experience will be related to traffic management/transport planning with the postholder advising on (and subsequently commissioning) the need for consultancy services for specialist advice. You should hold a post graduate qualification in Transport Planning, Urban Planning or Traffic Engineering and have substantial relevant experience in these areas together with experience of budget preparation and monitoring, staff management and working with consultants.

Service Planning Manager

£22,032-£23,733 p.a.
Ref: SPO. 02/394

You will be responsible for managing a county-wide team of professional, technical and clerical staff engaged on the operational and administrative aspects of Bus-based Public transport, principally tendered local bus services, school transport and travel assistance. You will be responsible for managing the team so as to meet the target dates for programmes of work for managing appropriate budget allocations and for maintaining an overview of the public transport network in the County. You should hold a Chartered qualification related to public transport, be educated to degree level in a relevant subject, and have a minimum of 5 years experience in respect of bus based public transport operations including preparing initiatives to improve the image of public transport, staff management, budget preparation, allocation and monitoring, and dealing with tendering arrangement.

Principal Officer (Publicity & Marketing)

£17,721-£19,110 p.a.
Ref: SPO. 09/394

You will supervise staff undertaking a range of activities in the public transport field including principally promotion and marketing of public transport services, and also the arrangement for providing and supporting Community Transport services and the provision of a leisure travel network. You should hold a degree in a relevant subject and have a minimum of 5 years experience within a public transport related organisation including promotional and marketing activities.

For all the above posts you will qualify for the Council's Car Leasing Scheme or receipt of Car User Allowance (SPT.02 and SPO.02 – Essential, SPO.09 – Casual) and a generous relocation package of £5,000 where appropriate. A flexitime scheme is in operation.

Suitably qualified/skilled/experienced applicants with a disability will be guaranteed an interview.

For an application form and further information please telephone Nottm (0602) 773580 or write to the Personnel Section, Department of Planning & Economic Development, Centenary House, 1 Wilford Lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 7QZ. Closing date 30 October.

The County Council welcomes applications from all, irrespective of gender, marital status, disability, race, age or sexual orientation.

Nottinghamshire County Council
County Hall, West Bridgford,
Nottingham NG2 7QP

OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR

Mairs Coaches are part of the major Scottish transport company, GRT Holdings Plc. Based in Aberdeen Mairs operate nearly 40 coaches on contract, private hire and express work.

A challenging vacancy exists within Mairs Coaches for an **Operations Supervisor.** Main responsibilities will include rostering drivers within constraints imposed by budget limits, drivers hours regulations and maintenance requirements, ensuring that a high quality of service is provided in a cost effective manner.

The ideal candidate will be strongly motivated and will have the ability to lead and motivate other personnel. You should also be able to respond positively to a challenge .A good knowledge of the Aberdeen area, PCV licence and CPC would be desirable.

As part of a major Scottish company an attractive salary and benefits package will be offered to the successful candidate. Applications, **under private cover,** should include a full CV. and should be sent by **23rd October to:**

Mr. J. Heubeck, Managing Director
Mairs Coaches, 395 King Street,
ABERDEEN, AB9 1SP.

Mairs Coaches

Passenger Transport Coordinator

£22,596 - £24,273

As a result of a major review of the passenger transport functions of the County Council, we have a very interesting and challenging opportunity for an experienced and self-motivated professional within our Support Services Division.

It will be your task to ensure that:

* appropriate passenger transport services are secured throughout the County;
* transport to school/college from home is provided for the Education Department;
* support is provided for the existing provisions made by the Social Services Department.

You will head the section in ensuring the effective and efficient provision of passenger transport, in particular budgeting and regular monitoring of expenditure involving considerable use of the latest computer technology.

With extensive knowledge of passenger transport coordination, you should hold a Chartered qualification, ideally related to passenger transport, and have strong, proven management skills enabling you to achieve a comprehensive range of targets. In addition, you must be able to work under pressure, often to tight deadlines. Relevant local government experience is desirable.

In return we offer a generous relocation package in approved cases to this attractive County. A subsidised lease car scheme is in operation.

For further information and an application form, telephone Trowbridge (0225) 751342 (24 hour answering service), or write to: The Director, Department of Planning and Highways, Wiltshire County Council, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8JD. When applying please quote Ref: 92/512. Closing date: 30th October 1992.

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Wiltshire COUNTY COUNCIL

(28361/APP)

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BOX 28379, Coach & Bus Week, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS
in the strictest confidence (28379/TEN)

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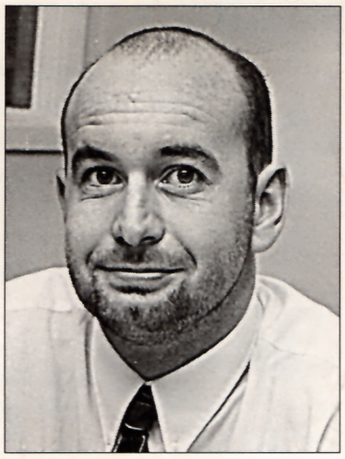
Merseybus man clears up

SALES executive John Wilson has joined Graffiti Busters, the surface protection arm of Merseybus.

Mr Wilson, 24, previously held sales positions with confectionery company Suchard and spent the last four years at an international tyre wholesaler in Speke.

He said: "I'll be concentrating on promoting the service to the private and public sector. Awareness seems to be growing of the benefits of such a service. Graffiti Busters can not only professionally remove graffiti but also apply safe protective coatings to areas which enables easy graffiti removal in the future."



John Wilson

Traffic commissioner elected president of Omnibus Society

SOUTH Wales and West Midland traffic commissioner, **John Mervyn Pugh** has been elected president of the Omnibus Society for 1993. He is the first traffic commissioner to be elected to the post.

The society was founded in 1929 to study the development and history of road passenger transport.

Mr Pugh is to give a presidential address on the theme of safe buses at the society's meting in London in January. Next September there is to be a presidential weekend in the Cardiff area.

During his time as traffic commissioner, Mr Pugh, a qualified solicitor, has been instrumental in the introduction of a recommended system of maintenance for bus operators. He has constantly said that the public must never lose the assumption that the buses they travel on are safe.

Bari's the boy...

AFTER qualifying with distinction on a management course and gaining his CPC qualification, 19-year-old **Bari Evans** of Pentre Motors has strengthened the prospect of the business successfully transfering to the third generation of the Evans family.

Owner David Evans took over from his father Peter, and, after the three-year HNC course at Llandrillo College, Bari has the necessary credentials to eventually step forward and run the 19-vehicle business.

Based in the Vale of Clwyd, Pentre Motors also runs Clwydian Tours and David Evans is chairman of the 60-member North Wales Coach Operators Association.

Steer guide for Scania sales in the West

SCANIA Coach Sales of Worksop has appointed Dermot Steer (right) as regional sales manager for the west country and south Wales.

Mr Steer, 32, is new to the coach business but has 13 years experience within the motor trade. Based in Weston-Super-Mare, he can be contacted on 0860 753826 or through the dealership on 0909 500822.

Scania Coach Sales managing director, Don MacIntosh, said: "Scania has long been a leading supplier of PCVs to the western part of Britain. Dermot joining our team strengthens our presence in this important region and we look forward to providing operators there with an even better level of Scania service in the future."

Three join coaching brokers

THREE appointments have been made at insurance brokers, Chapman Stevens.

Cliff Pavey has joined the new business team at High Wycombe.

Mr Pavey played a senior role at Prudential Insurance for over 20 years and was closely involved in the development of the PruCoach policy.

Peter Parsons has taken control of the service and administration of major bus and coach fleet accounts. He has over 25 years experience in the insurance business.

David Hull has been appointed claims manager. He held a senior claims position with Prudential for the last six years.

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3. Total No of Employees .....
4. Which of the following does your company operate? Day excursions ☐ Tour programme ☐ Local bus service ☐ Express coach service ☐ Private/contract hire ☐

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